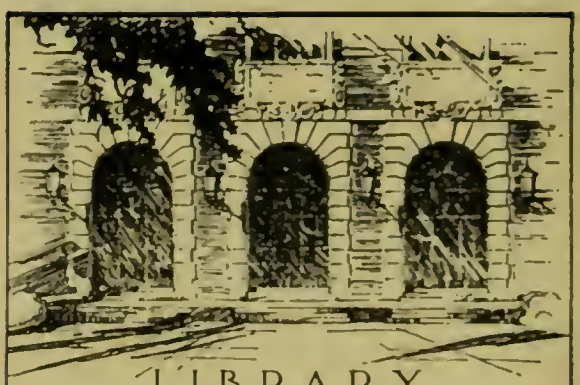

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A WHIM,

AND

ITS CONSEQUENCES.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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A WHIM,

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ITS CONSEQUENCES.

CHAPTER I.

It is very difficult to say whether the change in the practice of our courts, by which prisoners are allowed counsel for their defence, is a real advantage to them or not. It is probable that in most cases the right of reply conceded to the prosecution, and the loss of that assistance which the judge formerly thought himself bound to afford the accused person, more than balances the advantage of a practised defender. Indeed the privilege of reply on the part of the public prosecutor seems a rank injustice.

He brings the charge with all his materials prepared; he is bound to establish all the facts clearly, and at once, so as to leave no reasonable doubt. The prisoner replies by his counsel to an accusation made; and if that reply is satisfactory to the jury, the trial should end there, with the summing-up of the evidence, and the exposition of the law by the judge. Can any equitable motive be shown for granting the accuser the last word? I do not think it.

The impression made by the speech of the counsel for the defence on the trial of Chandos Winslow was very great. It carried the jury completely away with it; and one of them whispered to another, that he did not think they need hear any more evidence. It seemed to him that there was no case for the prosecution.

The bar, who regarded it critically, praised it amongst themselves very much, and took especial notice of the manner in which, as one of them expressed it, "Sir —— got lightly over the soft ground." They were

not all sure of Chandos Winslow's innocence; and during the greater part of the speech, they even doubted whether the learned counsel would get a verdict, though they generally agreed he ought. But at the end, when he so boldly declared that he could prove an unexceptionable alibi, their opinions changed, for they knew he was not a rash man, or one to risk the whole success of his case by a mode of defence the slightest shade of suspicion attaching to which, would strengthen every unfavourable impression regarding his client.

The witnesses for the defence were called as soon as the speech was concluded; and all the first were, contrary to general custom, those who could speak to character only. Old servants, old friends of the family, tenants, and neighbours were examined, and each testified with zeal and affection that the prisoner was a man much more likely to save life than to take it. But it was evident that the judge was impatient for the conclusion of the trial; and the questions put for the

defence were few and pertinent. A private memorandum found amongst the papers of Mr. Roberts, was then put in and proved to be in his hand-writing by his executor, in which the deceased had thus expressed himself: "Mem: to ask Mr. Chandos for some formal notification to respect his rights, and protect them against others in case of need." A few witnesses then proved the terms of affectionate regard on which the prisoner had always lived with his father's steward; and then Lord Overton was called. The judge did not appear to like his evidence being taken; but the counsel for the defence so shaped his questions, that they could not be rejected, and the peer, in mild and dignified terms, very different from his former rude and haughty manner, acknowledged that he had been the aggressor in the quarrel between himself and Mr. Winslow; and that in the whole transaction he had behaved like a gentleman and a man of honour. It required some skill to hang this testimony on to the cause; but that skill was evinced,

and the evidence received. All this part of the business was got over very rapidly; but it greatly damaged the case for the prosecution, so much so, that the judge more than once looked to Sergeant ——, as if he were inclined to ask whether they need proceed further.

At length "Thomas Muggeridge" was called, and, to the surprise of Chandos, a man in a plain livery got into the witness-box, and in answer to the questions propounded to him, deposed as follows:—"I am servant to the Honourable and Reverend Horace Fleming, Rector of Northferry. I know the prisoner at the bar by sight. I have once spoken to him. I spoke to him on the night of the fifth of February last. He called and inquired for my master about five o'clock. It might be ten minutes after; for the sun was down. It could not be more; for it was still quite light. I am quite sure of the man; for I had seen him in the streets of Northferry before, and knew him to be Mr.

Tracy's head-gardener. I went in and told Mr. Fleming that Mr. Acton wanted to speak with him; and he told me to show him in. When he had been with my master about ten minutes in the library, Mr. Fleming rang, and ordered me to bring lights. The prisoner was then seated on the opposite side of the table to my master. About five minutes after that, my master and the prisoner came out together, and walked through the large rooms which are unfurnished. They had a light with them. My master carried it. I ran to open the doors, and at the same time I said to my master that the gipsey woman, Sally Stanley, wanted to speak to him about her little boy. I had been talking with her at the outer door. Mr. Fleming said he would see her in a few minutes; and when I went back to tell her so, she asked me if I knew who that was talking to my master. I said, 'Oh! quite well;' and she answered, 'No, you don't! That is the son of the late Sir Harry Winslow.'

After my master and the prisoner had come out of the empty rooms, they went back into the library and remained there till a quarter to six. The clock struck the quarter as the prisoner went out. He stopped a minute or two at the door to say something to Mr. Fleming. He said, "It is very unlucky, indeed; but it cannot be helped; and then he talked a word or two in a language I do not understand. It sounded like Latin; but I cannot say. It was not French; for I have heard that talked. I have not the slightest doubt that the prisoner is the man; I had seen him, half-a-dozen times before in the streets of Northferry; and I had every opportunity of seeing him well that night."

The cross-examination then began by the counsel for the prosecution giving the witness a long exhortation regarding the sanctity of an oath; he then proceeded as follows:—

Counsel.—"How long have you been in the service of the Rev. Mr. Fleming?"

Witness.—"Six years, sir."

Counsel. — "And how long had you been in Northferry when this event took place?"

Witness. — "A little more than two months?"

Counsel. — "Then am I to understand that Mr. Fleming was newly appointed to the rectory at Northferry?"

Witness. — "He had been there about five months at that time; but I remained at the vicarage at Sandbourn for more than two months after he got Northferry."

Counsel.—"Oh! he is a pluralist, is he. Will you swear that it was not half-past five when the prisoner called?"

Witness.—"Yes, I will; for at half-past five it is quite dark."

"Will you swear it was not twenty-five minutes past?" asked the counsel.

Witness.—Yes, sir, I think I will, quite safely; for, as I told the other gentleman, though the sun was just down, and it might be a little greyish, yet there was plenty of light, and I could see across the street; for

I remember wondering what Higgins, the grocer, was doing with a barrel he was twisting round before his door."

Counsel.—" Now upon your oath, sir, what time was it really when the prisoner came?"

Witness.—" As near as I can guess, from five to ten minutes after five."

Counsel.—" And on what day did you say?"

Witness.—"On the fifth of February."

Counsel.—" Do you happen to recollect some circumstances that took place at your master's house on the morning of the first of that month?"

Witness, rubbing his head.—" Not quite rightly, sir. What circumstances do you mean? I don't remember what day the first was."

Counsel.—" Then how do you happen to remember so accurately all that took place upon the fifth?"

Witness, with a laugh.—" Oh, that is easily told. We came back to Sandbourn on the sixth, and I had a precious quantity of pack-

ing up to do on the fifth; so I recollect all about that day, well enough."

Counsel.—"Now as to the time when the prisoner went away, are you quite sure that it was not half-past five that struck?"

"Quite, sir," answered the witness; "I heard the half-hour go while I was talking with the gipsey woman, and the quarter to six just as my master and the prisoner were walking from the library to the hall-door, which I had got open in my hand. I counted three-quarters."

"You can't struggle against that," growled the judge; and the witness was suffered to go down.

„The honourable and reverend Horace Fleming" was then called, and entered the witness-box with a calm, firm step, and a look of placid dignity. "I know the prisoner in the dock," he said, in answer to the counsel's questions. "I never spoke with him but once, but have seen him several times in the grounds of Mr. Tracy, of Northferry. I always believed his real name to be Acton,

till the night of the fifth of February, when I was told by my servant that he was the son of the late Sir Harry Winslow. I recollect all the events of that night, perfectly. I went into my library a little before five o'clock, to select some sermons, as I was coming over to my vicarage at Sandbourn on the following day; and about ten minutes after, my servant informed me that Mr. Tracy's head-gardener wanted to speak to me. He was shown into the library by my orders, and I asked him to sit down. I had heard from Mr. Tracy that he was a man of extraordinary information for his station in life; and it did not therefore surprise me to find him mingle very appositely quotations in Latin and Greek with his conversation. At the same time, I will own, both his manner and the request he came to make, seemed to me very strange. He was a good deal excited; and, after apologizing in a hurried manner for taking a liberty, he said, a friend of his—indeed, a relation—had been left, by Sir Harry Win-

slow, all the books and a great number of the pictures at Winslow Abbey; together with the large book cases, and a great deal of other furniture. Sir William Winslow, he said, was behaving very ill about the whole business; and his friend was anxious to have the various articles removed from Winslow Abbey at once, but had no place to put them in. He then went on to explain to me, that having heard I had several large apartments unfurnished in the rectory, he thought I might be induced to give these articles house-room for a few weeks, till they could be otherwise disposed of. I replied, that the rooms though large for a rectory, were low pitched and difficult of access, so that it would be impossible to place tall bookcases in them, whatever inclination I might have to render the gentleman he mentioned any service. We went to look at the rooms, and he acknowledged that what he had proposed could not be done. He stayed some little time afterwards, conversing on various subjects; and I found

him a man of very extensive information, which decidedly induced me to believe that his original station in life was not that which he assumed. He spoke with considerable acerbity of Sir William Winslow; and although he affected a certain degree of roughness of manner, probably to harmonize with his assumed character, it was quite evident to me that he had received the education of a gentleman. I did suspect him to be Mr. Winslow before our conversation was at an end; so much so, indeed, that I asked him if he knew Sir William Winslow was at Northferry House. He replied, Yes; but he should keep out of his way. He left me just as the clock was striking a quarter to six. At the door, I expressed my sorrow that I could not take care of the valuable things he seemed to consider in danger; and he replied, 'It is very unfortunate, indeed; but it cannot be helped: Dominus providebit.'"

Counsel.—"You say his manner was a

good deal excited; pray, what do you mean by that expression?"

Witness.—"I mean, hurried, hasty, impatient, agitated. Once he fell into a reverie, which lasted two or three minutes."

Counsel.—"Will you have the goodness to state, Mr. Fleming, with as much precision as possible, at what hour the prisoner visited you?"

"Silence!" cried the judge, in a voice of thunder. "What is all that noise at the door?"

"A man will force his way in, my lord; said one of the officers, from the other end of the court; "and there is not a bit of room."

"Take him into custody," cried the judge.

"He says, he wishes to give evidence for the prisoner, my lord," shouted the officer; the noise and confusion still continuing.

"He will be called if he is wanted," said the judge. "Take him into custody, if he continues disorderly."

The volunteer witness apparently did so;

for there was a momentary scuffle at the door, and then some one was removed by the officers.

The question of the counsel was then repeated to Mr. Fleming; and he replied, "To a minute I cannot exactly say; but it must have been somewhere between five and a quarter past; for the clock upon my library table struck the quarter while he was sitting with me."

Counsel.—"Is that clock very accurate?"

Witness.—"It is set every day by that of the church; which is, I believe, a very good clock."

Counsel.—"Then it was before a quarter to five that he called at your door? How long does it take you generally to walk from the Rectory to Northferry House?

Witness.—"From a quarter of an hour to twenty minutes by the fields; it would take about half-an-hour by the road."

"And you are quite certain that the prisoner left you at a quarter to six—not before?" said the counsel.

Witness. — "No, rather after; for the clock struck when we were in the passage, and I spoke to him for a short time at the door."

Counsel.—"Then, are you prepared to swear that the prisoner is the man who was with you on that night, as you have described?"

Mr. Fleming turned round his head and gazed for a moment or two at Chandos Winslow, after which he replied; in a firm, clear voice, "I am. He is dressed very differently on the present occasion; but I have not the slightest doubt."

Judge.—"I will put it to the counsel for the prosecution whether they can proceed any further after the evidence they have heard?"

"My lord, I have done," said the counsel for the prosecution. "I am not in the least prepared to invalidate the testimony of the reverend gentleman. His character is above reproach; and I have nothing more to say."

"Gentlemen of the jury," said the judge,

"you have heard the evidence; but I will sum up, if you think fit."

"There is not the slightest occasion, my lord," said the foreman of the jury. "It would be only wasting your lordship's time; for we are all of one mind, and have been so for the last half-hour. We therefore beg at once to return a verdict of 'Not guilty.'"

Loud acclamations followed the verdict; which were with difficulty repressed; but it was remarked that the face of the accused did not express the slightest pleasure, and that Sir —— leaned his arms upon the table and covered his eyes with his hands, as if overpowered by deep emotion, or exhausted by his exertions. He was in very bad health at the time; but not a member of the bar had ever seen him give way before, and there was much marvelling. The judge addressed a few words to the late prisoner, declaring that he quitted the court with his honour unimpaired, and without a stain upon his name; but Chandos Winslow

only bowed with a grave and stately air, and seemed in no way to participate in the satisfaction which his acquittal had produced in the court.

CHAPTER II.

"SIR —— will be with you in ten minutes, sir," said the landlord of the great inn, the Green Dragon, at S——, addressing the liberated prisoner. "He has been sent for by the judges. Dinner was ordered at six; but a message came to put it off for half-an-hour."

Chandos bowed his head, and the landlord withdrew, leaving him alone in the sitting-room of the great barrister, who, as soon as the trial was over, had sent him a note, begging him to dine with him. He took up a book. It was a volume of celebrated trials. A page was turned down at that of Mr.

Cowper, afterwards Lord Cowper, for murder; and although we have seen the very sparing use made of it by the counsel, every page was marked with thick marginal notes in pencil, evidently freshly written. Chandos had not much time allowed him to read; for a minute or two after he had opened the work he heard the voice of his little solicitor, inquiring with quick reiteration, "Where is he? where is Mr. Winslow? What number did you say?" and in another moment he was in the room.

"My dear sir," said the solicitor, shaking him warmly by the hand, "I congratulate you a thousand times upon the result of the trial. It was a most splendid defence—magnificent—unequalled,—our learned friend out-did himself. Did you mark how he jumped over all the difficulties? how lightly he trod upon the dangerous ground? Really it was a treat to hear him—the whole bar rings with it. It is really worth undergoing a trial for such a defence."

"It is at least some compensation for the

pain of one, to find that I have such a friend," replied Chandos. "I am waiting for him now with a heart full of gratitude."

"He may be a little while first," said the solicitor, with a very cunning look, "he's about that little awkward affair; but it can make no difference now—verdict given. In the meantime, I have just come to say a word or two upon business, my dear sir. You were considerate enough to give me a power of attorney, and also to execute a deed in case of the worst, which, when you have a moment's leisure, must all be re-arranged, as the best, and not the worst has happened. But in the meantime I have taken the most prompt measures to secure the furniture, books, statues, pictures, and other chattels, left you under your late worthy father's will. Now perhaps, as the fees and other expenses are heavy—perhaps you would—as I understand you are going to London directly—give me some little security in the shape of a lien upon said property for the amount of costs. I have got a small document here

merely a few words, which will answer all the purposes, if you will look it over."

"Certainly," answered Chandos Winslow, taking the paper out of his hand. "But you will understand, my good sir, that I intend to pay these costs from other resources; and therefore you must assure me that you will not use this paper, which, I see, gives you power to sell, unless I fail in discharging your account within a reasonable time."

"Undoubtedly, undoubtedly," cried the lawyer, "it is merely as a security—nothing more, I can assure you—all shall be taken care of, and held sacred as the great seal."

"An inventory of all these effects," continued Chandos, "has been already made by a friend of mine; and as it seems fair enough that you should have some means of paying yourself, I will sign the paper upon the understanding I have mentioned."

"Ah—oh—yes; here are pen and ink," said the solicitor: and the paper was signed.

"I thank you most sincerely, my dear sir," said Chandos Winslow, "for the interest

you have taken, and the skill you have displayed in this sad affair. But let me inquire what you meant just now? You spoke as if my friend, Sir —— was absent on business of mine, and as if I knew what that business is. Will you have the goodness to explain?"

"Oh, it is about that fellow who is so unfortunately like you," said the lawyer, "the man whom Mr. Fleming and his servant must have mistaken for you. He came to the door of the court just at the end, and wanted to force his way in—did you not hear all the hubbub? But Dickins, the tipstaff, is a capital fellow; and as soon he had got authority, he took him into custody, and walked him off. If he had got in, he would have spoiled the whole defence, and played the devil."

Chandos Winslow sunk down into his chair in horror and mortification. "And is it possible," he exclaimed, "that the life of an innocent man can depend upon a mere mistake of one person for another, and that in an English court of justice too?"

"Quite possible, my dear sir," replied the little lawyer, "when the party accused will not explain suspicious circumstances. I am perfectly confident of your innocence—always have been—all those who are well acquainted with you are the same; and it seems that our leader knows it from the facts that you have stated to him. Indeed, it was that carried him through; for if he had not been perfectly sure, I do not think even he could have made such a defence. But I can tell you, Mr. Winslow, that if that worthy had got into court when he tried, you'd have had a verdict of 'guilty' against you; unless, indeed, Sir —— had some back card to play: which I think he had—always did think he had—and that kept my courage up. Perhaps the real story would have popped out, if the alibi had failed. However, there is no use thinking of these things now. We've got a verdict: all's safe; and not all the judges in England can overset it."

"But there is something more to an honest man than merely getting a verdict,"

said Chandos, gravely. "When it is known how the verdict has been obtained, what will men think of me? How can I be satisfied with such an acquittal, obtained by a gross and extraordinary error."

"Oh! in courts of justice, my dear sir, it is very customary to combat error by error. You were likely to be hanged by one fallacious train of evidence: we have saved you by another. Error for error, that's all—rather odd, but very satisfactory."

"By no means satisfactory to me," replied Chandos Winslow.

The little lawyer grinned as if a merry reply was rising to his lips; for to win the cause was all he cared for; and the means seemed to him of very little consequence. But his answer was cut short by the entrance of the great barrister, who shook the late prisoner warmly by the hand, without, however, venturing to congratulate him upon the result of the trial. The little solicitor took his leave; and as soon as he was gone Sir —— turned kindly to his friend, and,

taking him by the hand, he said, "I understand all that you feel, my dear Winslow; but put your mind at ease. No one will doubt your innocence, although we were obliged to take advantage of a good man's mistake to gain a verdict from the jury."

"It is bitterly mortifying to me," answered Chandos Winslow; "to feel that I have been acquitted solely by an error."

"What could be done?" answered the barrister. "You prohibited me from using the only legitimate means of defence; and, although the demolition of a great part of the evidence against you by my young friend B——'s cross-examination, taken with the fact of another person having been coming from the grounds at the very time of the murder, might have raised a doubt in the minds of the jury, and you might have obtained a verdict in your favour after long hesitation; yet the suspicion which would then have attached to you, would have been very strong, and very general. As it is, no doubt will rest with any one, but the two or three

who may have seen your friend Lockwood, and remarked the extraordinary likeness between you."

"And yet that, my dear friend," replied Chandos, "will be enough to embitter the whole of the rest of my life."

"Do not suffer it to do so," answered his friend; "for the judge who tried the case is quite convinced of your innocence: and I must now tell you, though it may spoil your dinner, that suspicion has lighted on the right person."

"How so?" answered Chandos, starting up. "I trust you have not mentioned any of the facts."

"They are all still under the seal of confession," replied the barrister, with a smile; "but the circumstances are these. A person by the name of Lockwood, who, it seems, is your half-brother, was taken into custody for creating a disturbance at the door of the court. He mentioned some circumstances to the constables, which were reported to the judge, who saw him in his room after the

rising of the court. The great likeness instantly struck his lordship. He made inquiries which brought out the whole story of Lockwood's visit to Mr. Fleming. I was immediately sent for, and had to submit to a veiled and courteous reproach for the course I had thought fit to pursue. For a moment Lucifer had nearly prevailed to make me treat his lordship somewhat cavalierly; for the trial was over, and he had nothing to say to it; but thinking better of the matter, I showed him that it was impossible for me to refuse evidence in your favour voluntarily tendered; and, at the same time, I gave him my word of honour that I would not have pursued the course I did pursue, unless I had the most positive certainty of your innocence, although circumstances which I was not permitted to mention, prevented me from proving the real facts before the jury. His lordship is very keen and quick in his combinations: he had Lockwood in again while I was there, and asked him two or three questions, which

elicited the following facts: that your brother and Mr. Roberts were by no means upon good terms, and that several sharp discussions had taken place between them;—that Mr. Roberts had discovered, among some papers at Winslow Abbey, a memorandum in your father's handwriting, to the effect that a will of a much more recent date than the one proved had been given into your brother's hands some time before Sir Harry's death; that Roberts knew the particulars of that will, which were very favourable to yourself; and that he had gone over from Winslow Abbey to Northferry House, in order to communicate the facts to you. This, of course, was sufficient to show that you could have no earthly motive for taking the poor man's life; but when Lockwood went on to state, that Sir William at the very time of the murder was at Northferry House, his lordship immediately connected that fact with the hasty return of some one from the grounds through the green-house, and some strange circum-

stances which have got abroad regarding your brother's marriage with Miss Tracy—with Miss Emily Tracy, I mean," he added, seeing Chandos Winslow's face change as he spoke.

"My brother's marriage with Miss Tracy!" exclaimed the latter; "I never heard of it."

"Oh, yes," continued the barrister, "they were married—or half married; for I believe the lady fainted in the midst of the ceremony; and a letter having been suddenly given to your brother, he left his bride in the church and went abroad. All these circumstances made out a case of suspicion in the judge's mind against Sir William, which he strove cunningly enough to confirm by putting some dextrous questions to me. I was as silent as the dead; and after some further conversation he dismissed your friend Lockwood with a reprimand. Nevertheless, I feel sure his lordship will hold some communication with the magistrates on the subject; but I do not believe they will be

able to prove anything against your brother without your evidence."

"Which they will never have," replied Chandos Winslow.

"But which they ought to have," replied the barrister, shaking his head; "and now my good friend, I must run away, to cleanse my face and hands from the filth of courts. I have invited two or three of the bar to meet you. After dinner, at half-past nine, and at a quarter-past ten, I have two consultations. At eleven I am off for London; and if you will take a place in my carriage, I will give you a little advice by the way; for, from Lockwood's information, I think you would have a good case for stopping the sale of Winslow Abbey."

"I must go over to Northferry first," replied Chandos; "but I will see you when I come to town. I am afraid, however, it is too late to stop the sale."

"Oh dear, no;" replied his friend; "the only thing that is too late is my toilet; for I hear the voice of our learned antagonist,

inquiring for my rooms;" and, running through the neighbouring door, he made his escape just as Sergeant —— was announced.

It was with no very pleasant feelings, it must be confessed, that Chandos Winslow found himself tête-à-tête with a man who had moved heaven and earth to hang him, not more than four or five hours before. But whatever notion he had previously formed of the worthy sergeant's demeanour in private life, from the part he had borne in the trial, it was very speedily dissipated after he entered unwigged and ungowned. The sergeant shook him heartily by the hand, congratulated him with a very joyous laugh, upon the result of the trial, and talked of the whole affair in which a fellow-creature's life had been at stake, as if it had been a mere game at cards, where Sir —— had held most trumps, and won the rubber. Never was there a more jovial companion; and when they sat down to dinner, after several other barristers had arrived, the sergeant

laughed and talked and cracked his jokes, and drank his champagne, till one of the uninitiated might have thought a consultation with him, after the meal, an expedient somewhat dangerous.

The conversation during dinner principally turned upon snipe-shooting. There was very little law; and the "feast of reason and the flow of soul" did not afford the banquet the lawyers seemed most to delight in. Habit is very strong in its power over the body; but, I think, even stronger with the mind. The most vehement rivalries, the most mournful ceremonies, the most tragic scenes, aye, even the most fatal events lose their great interest when they become habitual. The statesman, the undertaker, the physician, the soldier can bear witness to it, as they feast after the fierce debate, the solemn funeral, the painful death-bed, or the battle-field. Nothing on earth ever makes twice the same impression. How those lawyers laughed and talked, though two trials had taken place since that of

Chandos Winslow had terminated, and a woman had been condemned to death, a man had been sent to expiate one half of a criminal life by labouring during the rest in chains and exile!

Chandos felt benumbed by the heavy weight of the past, and not cheered by the light emptiness of the present; so that he was glad when dinner was over, and coffee drunk. The men of law betook themselves to earnest consultations, re-invigorated by the temporary repose; for in reality and truth, during that seeming revel, the giant minds had but been sleeping. It was rest that they took: and happy are they who are enabled to cast off the burden of heavy thought, the moment that it is no longer necessary to bear it.

Chandos took leave of his friend for the time, and ordered a chaise for Northferry; but while it was in preparation he issued forth to inquire in the town for Lockwood. His search was vain, however. He found out the place where his half-brother had dined, after being discharged from custody

by the judge's order; and he learned at the prison that he had been there to inquire after him; but nothing more could he discover, and the demeanour of the people of whom he inquired was not pleasant. They neither said nor did indeed anything that was uncivil; but there was an instant look of intelligence wherever he presented himself, which said, as plainly as a look can speak, "There is the man who was tried for murder!" It was all very painful; and he returned to the inn, feeling himself a marked man for the rest of life.

It was a very painful feeling: it must ever be so; to know that his name would never be mentioned without suspicion—that wherever he appeared the tale would be told—the past spoken of. He fancied he saw the shrugged shoulder, the significant smile, the doubtful look—that he heard the poisonous insinuation, the affected tone of candour, and the half-veiled accusation. On his name there was a stain, in his reputation a vulner-

able point: every enemy could strike him there—every false friend, every jealous rival could wound him, either with the bold broad charge, or the keen and bitter sneer. He had been tried for murder! It was a terrible fate; but it was irrevocable. The brand, he thought, was upon him which no Lethe can wash out.

CHAPTER III.

The chaise rolled on rapidly in the darkness of the night. Chandos was fatigued—exhausted—but he slept not. Weariness of mind often produces the same effect as over-fatigue of body, and refuses that rest which is needful for its cure. His thoughts, too, were very busy. What was next to be done? What was the course he was to pursue in life? A new chain was upon him, a fresh obstacle was in his way. He had stood in the felon's dock accused of the highest crime known to the law. What an impediment was that to all advancement! In what profession would it not prove a barrier almost insuperable?

And Rose Tracy, what would be the effect upon her? He would not believe that it would change her; but yet, though she might still love, though that consolation might be left him, how could he expect that her father would either listen to his suit, or permit his daughter to give even hope to a man marked out by such a record as that which stood against his name? Even if he did, what chance, what prospect was there of his ever being in a position to claim her hand?

On such subjects rolled his thoughts, one following another, innumerable, like the waves of an everflowing sea, while mile after mile of the way went by. The night was dark and warm; one of those dull, sultry spring nights, when the clouds seem to wrap the whole earth in a dull, damp pall, shutting out the breath of heaven. The windows were all down, and Chandos gazed forth upon the darkness, finding something therein congenial to the heavy obscurity of his own fate, offering nothing to interrupt

the gloomy current of his thoughts, yet tranquillizing them with a solemn stillness.

"Mr. Tracy I must see," he thought; "for we have business to settle: and Rose I will endeavour to see, that I may know, or at least guess at her feelings. But I will not try to bind her to anything. It would be cruel—ungenerous. No, no; my fate must be cleared of these dark clouds, before I dare ask her to walk forth under the same sky as myself."

And then he thought of leaving her—perhaps, of losing her—of never seeing that fair face, that sweet smile again—of hearing that she was united to another. And his heart was very bitter.

On, on, rolled the chaise, as quick as the postboy could induce the horses to go. It was a long stage, a dark night, and a weary way back. He wished it was over, and his boots off. They passed through Milltown, and rattled over Longheath, then down they went into stony Langburn, and then slowly up the hill again. When

they got to the top, the horses were once more put into a brisk pace, and away they went over the downs, with darkness all around them, and the road hardly distinguishable from the turf. But still the postboy kept upon his way, knowing the ground by habit, in the night as well as in the day. At length they went rapidly down the hill near the bottom of which stands the thirteenth milestone from S——, and just as the chaise crossed the little rivulet which winds on through the valley, Chandos felt a sudden jerk, and then a depression of the vehicle. A grating sound followed, while the horses pulled on for a yard or two, and then the chaise stopped. The postboy got down and poked his head under the carriage, swore a little, and approaching the door, told the traveller that the axle was broken.

"That is bad news, indeed," said Chandos Winslow. "How far are we from an inn?"

"About three mile, sir," replied the man; "but if you just go back to the stone, and

take the path to the right, it will save you half-a-mile. I must get the horses out, and leave the shay here; but I'll put your portmanteau on the off horse, and get it up that way."

"But can I miss the road?" asked Chandos. "It is long since I was in this part of the country."

"Lord bless you, sir; you can't miss it, no how," rejoined the man; "it is as straight as a line. You just go by the old, tumble-down mill, and then half-a-mile further you come to the church, and then——"

"I know, I know," answered the young gentleman; "I recollect it now;" and he walked away, turning back for a moment to tell the driver to order him a fresh chaise for Northferry, if he arrived first at the inn.

The little path on which he had been directed rose gently from the place where the milestone stood, to surmount the shoulder of the high range of hills over which they had been passing for the last two miles; and it was plainly marked out by the white,

chalky stuff of which it was composed, from the dark hue of the short turf upon the downs. After Chandos had gone on for about the distance of a mile, there seemed to be a glimmering amongst the clouds to the east, and the objects around became more distinct. The moon was rising. Quarter of a mile further, he caught sight of a mill, which he now remembered well; for it had often served him as a sort of landmark in his youth, and was connected with memories both very pleasant and very painful. It lay upon his right hand as he went, and he knew that, from the high point on which it had been placed, to catch all the winds, Elmsly, one of his father's seats, was just seven miles distant by the hill paths, and Winslow Abbey, just eleven on the other side; though the distance between them by the roads was twenty-four.

He had not seen that mill, however, for many years; for unpleasant associations had attached themselves to it of late, and overbalanced the pleasant recollections of youth.

As he now gazed on it, walking on, the sight, as it stood out from the sky, which was of a pale grey, with the moon's light amongst the clouds, did not cheer him; and the long, thin arms of the rotting sails called back to his mind the description which Lockwood had given of it.

From the point where the mill was passed by the path, the latter descended towards the little town where Chandos expected to get horses; but ere it reached that bourne, the road he was following had a labyrinth of lanes and hedges to go through. Before it came to that more cultivated part, however, it ran some way along at the bottom of the bare hills amongst some green pasture-ground with the downs on the right and the hedge-rows on the left. Just in the midst of this track stood a little detached church, called St. Mildred's, with a tall conical spire, somewhat dilapidated, and a little church-yard, within a ruined stone-wall. Though the faint moon through the veil of cloud did not afford much light below the edge of the hill, yet the spot where the church stood

was marked out by its spire rising over everything else around, and by the numerous black yew-trees in its garden of graves. Chandos saw it some time before he reached it, and the sight of it too was sad to him. Yet when he was opposite the rude gate, with its cross-beam overhead, he stopped to gaze at the old church and its dark funereal trees; and that sensation which sometimes comes salutary over us, of the nothingness of human joys and sorrows, stole upon him as he asked himself, where were the hands that raised the building—where those who planted the trees—where the many generations that had passed since the one arose, the others sprang up. As he paused—it was but an instant—he thought he heard a low moan, as of some one in distress. It was repeated, and came from the churchyard; and, opening the gate, he went in. The moans led him on nearly to the back of the church, which stood detached, with no other building near; but presently they ceased, and he looked around over the waves of graves, and their little head-stones, without

seeing any one. He felt certain that the sounds had proceeded from a spot not far distant; and, raising his voice, he asked, "Is any one there? Does any one want help?"

There was no answer; and, after stopping for a moment, Chandos walked a step or two further; and then, looking a little to the left, he thought he saw something like a human form stretched out upon one of the little grassy mounds. He approached quietly, and looked down upon it, perceiving that he had not deceived himself. It was the form of a woman, lying with her face downwards upon a grave evidently not newly made. She was living, for her breath came thick, and laden with sobs; and Chandos asked in a kindly tone, "What is the matter, my good woman? Can I do anything to assist you?"

At the sound of his voice, the woman started up, exclaiming, "You!—You here? Oh, fiend!"—But then she suddenly stopped, gazed at his tall figure in the dim light, and then added, "Ah! is it you, sir? I did not know you: I thought it was another." And

she sat herself down upon the adjoining grave, and covered her eyes with her hands.

"Surely I know your voice," said Chandos. "Are you not the gipsy woman, Sally Stanley, the little boy's mother?"

"You know my voice better than I know yours, it seems," replied the woman; "for yours deceived me."

"But what are you doing here, my poor woman?" inquired Chandos. "You seem in great distress, on some account. Come, leave this place; it can do no good to you, or any one, to remain weeping over a grave at midnight."

"Every year of my life, at this day, and this hour, Chandos Winslow," replied the woman, "I come here to weep and pray over those I murdered."

"Murdered!" exclaimed her companion. "But it is nonsense, my good woman; your brain is wandering."

"I know it is," answered Sally Stanley; "I need no one to tell me that. It does wander often, and sometimes long; but on

this night it wanders always. I said 'murdered,' did I not? Well, I said true. I did murder him; but not as your brother murdered Roberts, the steward, with one blow, that ended at once all pain and resistance—slowly, slowly, I murdered him—by grief, and shame, and care, and despair; aye, and want too had its share at last."

"Good God! then who are you?" demanded Chandos Winslow.

"Ask me no questions," answered the woman. "Ever since those days a fire comes into my brain, from time to time, that nothing will put out till it burns out of itself; and I see more than other people, know more—I see the dead, alive; and I behold the unborn deeds before they are committed; and the hand of God is upon me. Ever on this night—the night when the old man died of sorrow, I am at the worst; for then it is that my heart is given up to the hell of its own making, and I come here to cool my brain and my bosom upon the green grass of his

grave. Disturb me not; but go, and leave me. I can have no help of man."

"Nay, poor thing!" said Chandos Winslow, "I cannot, in truth, leave you in such sorrow and in such a place, without trying to give you some consolation. You have said you come here to pray. Do you not know then, that, whatever be your offences, there is pardon and comfort for all who pray in faith and with repentance?"

"Aye; but we must all bear our punishment, nevertheless," replied the woman. "Do not try to console me, young man. If you would needs stay, (and it is better that you should, for I have wanted much to see you, and have much to say to you,) sit down on the church step there for a while, till this hour is past, and I will tell you things you want to hear. But do not try to console me. God may give me consolation at his own time. Man can never."

Chandos was eager to get to his journey's end; but yet he felt real compassion for the

poor woman, and a strong reluctance to leave her there alone. He thought that if he remained for a while, and humoured her sorrow, she might be the sooner induced to quit the spot; and he determined to sit down on the church steps, as she had said, and wait the result. Such as I have said were his strongest motives for remaining; but at the same time a doubt, a suspicion of the truth, to which he would hardly give a moment's attention, crossed his mind; and then her strange words regarding his brother and the steward awakened still stronger curiosity, and made him almost believe that there had been other witnesses, besides himself, to the crime for which he had so lately been tried.

"Well, I will wait, then," he said; and, retiring from the spot, he seated himself at a distance, and gave himself up to thought. There is nought so variable as the influence of thought upon our appreciation of the passing of time. Sometimes it seems to extend the minutes into hours, the hours into months and years. Sometimes thought seems to swallow

up time, and leave nought in existence but itself. The latter was more the case with Chandos Winslow than the former. The church clock struck one shortly after he sat down. It struck two before he fancied that the hand had half paced round the dial, and a minute or two after the woman was by his side.

"You have waited patiently," she said, "and I will try and repay you. I longed to see you as soon as I heard that it was all done, and you were free. I owe you much; but you owe the gipsey woman something, Chandos Winslow; for, had it not been for me, they would have found you guilty."

"Indeed!" said the young gentleman; "but how is that, Sally Stanley?"

"Did not the parson bear witness that you had been with him that night?—aye, and his servant too?" she asked. "Well, I found out that they had mistaken Lockwood for you, and had mistaken me in what I told them; and I went over to Sandbourn, and first told the good young man of what they accused you, and that he ought to go and give evidence at

the trial. He was for setting out directly; but I let him know that the inquest was over, and that he could do no good till the trial, and bade him keep himself quiet till then. Lockwood would have spoiled it all," she added, in a rambling manner; "but I took care of Lockwood too, and kept him close till it was too late for him to do any harm. He had nearly done it though, they tell me. He is a harsh man, Lockwood."

"But he has a good, kind heart," replied Chandos.

"He does not mind treading on other people's hearts," she answered, leaning her head upon her hand, and seating herself upon one of the lower steps. "But whither are you going now, sir? This is not the road to London."

"I am going to Northferry, Sally," replied Chandos. "I must see Mr. Tracy, and your poor little boy. The dear child gave his evidence nobly; but I find Mrs. Humphreys took him away out of the town as soon as the trial was over."

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"Aye, he little knew whom he was giving evidence against," said the woman, in a wild way; "but they tell me he behaved well."

"You seem to have got intelligence of everything very soon," said Chandos.

"Sooner than any body else," answered Sally Stanley; "we always do. You Englishmen may try what you like—coaches, and railroads, and telegraphs; but the gipsies will always have the news before you. There were many of our people there, and I soon had the tidings. But what do you want at Northferry? The boy is there, but he will do well enough without you; and as to Mr. Tracy, you will not find him. He is far enough away with all his. Have you not heard all that has happened?"

"No," answered Chandos; "I thought he was there. Has he gone to London?"

"They have taken him to London," answered the woman; "but I will try and tell you all about it, if my brain will let me. You know that he ruined himself with buying what are called shares; and that, to save himself from the first shock, he sold his child—his

Lilly, as he used to called her—to a murderer—a murderer of old men. He thought, that by selling the best of his shares he would be able to stave off the rest of the sums he owed; and that the Northferry property would, at all events, be saved for his own daughter, as it would become her husband's —the murderer's. I told her how it would be long before. Then the other girl, I suppose, was to be provided for by the old General.—I only tell you what the people say. Well, let me see, where was I? All the shares were to be sold; but the shares could not be found; for a lawyer-man—a rogue, called Scriptolemus Bond, had run away and carried them all with him. So Mr. Tracy was arrested, you see, and taken to London; and his brother and the two girls went up the morning after."

"Good Heaven! did he really trust that man?" cried Chandos. "His looks, his words, almost his gestures spoke him a charlatan. I heard him boast he had a commission to buy shares for Mr. Tracy; but I doubted

the very fact, because he said it; and never believed that he could be trusted to a large amount by a man not wanting in good sense."

"Every man is a fool in some points, and every woman a fool in one," answered Sally Stanley. "But I have nothing to do with his folly or his wisdom.—What is it to me? However, he wanted to make his riches more; and then every man goes mad. He trusted a knave, and the knave ran off with the plunder. So Mr. Tracy is in prison, or something like it, and the knave is free."

"This is sad—this is very sad," said Chandos. "Is there no trace of this villain, who has brought a kind and generous family from affluence to beggary?"

"Oh! he will go at large like other villains," replied the woman. "The world is full of them, and they sit in high places. It is very strange that all men take so much interest, and feel so much compassion for a rich man that falls into poverty; while a world more misery may come upon a humble

household without drawing a tear beyond the four walls of their own cottage."

"There is some truth in what you say," replied her companion, thoughtfully; "but yet, the fall from high to low is deeper than from low to lower: the contrast more painful. I should think, too, that you would much regret this misfortune to Mr. Tracy's family, as thousands of others, in a far inferior position to himself, in point of fortune, will mourn over it. Can you tell me a family who were more kind to all around them? Can you tell me a rich man whose wealth was more liberally shared with the poor and needy? Was any man suffered to want in his neighbourhood, if Mr. Tracy or his daughters could relieve him? Did any child lack education in his neighbourhood from the parents' poverty? Was he harsh even to those for whom the laws are harsh? Even your own child: did not these two young ladies, who now, perhaps, are weeping over their own and their father's ruin, show

themselves kind, and tender, and generous to him?"

"I am wrong, I am wrong, Chandos Winslow," cried the woman; "but something makes me bitter this night. I am not myself, young man, I tell you. You must come and speak with me another day, and perhaps I can do something. The man you speak of is a good man, and should be saved. Let us try to save him."

"But how can that be done?" asked Chandos, sadly. "He is already ruined, it would seem."

"Oh, no; no one is ruined who has not broken a father's heart, and laid him in the grave," replied Sally Stanley: "that is ruin! that is ruin! It is ruin here—and here;" and she laid her hand upon her brow, and upon her heart. But you will come and see me, and talk to me again, and see what can be done to save him."

"Why, what can you do in a matter like this?" asked her young companion.

"Did I not help to save your life?" she demanded, quickly. "I may do something in this too—come back and I will tell you more. I must have time to think. To-night I have no thoughts. Will you come?"

"But where shall I find you, and when?" asked Chandos. "Your abode, I fancy, is always varying; and I might seek you over the whole country without discovering you."

"Come in a fortnight to the place where we met three months ago, when you were going on a scheme that all the wise ones and the great ones would have thought madness," was the woman's reply. "You recollect the place in the lanes above Northferry: come there. I knew not at that time what drove you out of that fine house at Elmsly, and made you put on a gardener's coat, and take service like a hireling. I thought it was the Jacob and Laban story; and that you were going to serve for a fair wife; but I know more now. And a sweet, good girl she is, too. Her gay heart will be

dull enough now, I dare say, poor thing; but you must go and comfort her."

"Where am I to find her? is the question," answered Chandos. "But, doubtless, I shall hear from the servants at Northferry."

"The servants!" cried the woman, with a laugh: "there are no servants there. The house is shut up. Half the servants are discharged; and the rest are gone with the old General and his nieces to London. But I will tell you where to find them. He has a house in a place they call Green-street—though it is as brown as all the rest of the den. Go there, and ask for them, and you will find some of them, at least."

"Do you mean that Mr. Tracy has a house in Green-street?" asked Chandos. "Or are you still speaking of the General?"

"Of the General, to be sure," replied the woman. "It is a small, narrow house, fit for a solitary man. I was there once, and the old soldier, his servant, was kind to me, because I talked to him of Northferry, and

the places round. He is not a bad man, General Tracy, as men go—better than most; and I think he will keep his word with the boy, whatever be his concern for his brother."

"You may be quite certain he will," replied her companion. "General Tracy is a man of honour, and never breaks his word."

"What! not to a woman?" demanded Sally Stanley, with a mocking laugh. "Well, go up to him, and see. Put him in mind of the boy; and tell him for me, that mice sometimes help lions, as the old fable-book says that I read at school. Then come down to me this day fortnight; and perhaps I may tell you more—I do not say that I will—I do not say that I can; but yet I have seen more unlikely things. Do you know anything of your brother?"

"Nothing," replied Chandos, "but that he has gone to the continent—whither, I know not."

"He has taken a bad heart and a heavy conscience with him," said the woman.

"But you must learn where he has gone; for some day you will have to claim your own at his hands. He will not always triumph in his wickedness. A day of retribution will come."

"I trust he is not so wicked as you seem to think," answered Chandos Winslow; "and, at all events, I pray, if he have done wrong, as doubtless he has in some things, that repentance rather than retribution may reach him."

"If he has done wrong!" cried the woman, vehemently. "Chandos Winslow, do you not know that there is upon him a load of crime that may well weigh him down to perdition? I know not what you saw on that dark fifth of February; but there were those who saw you with a dead man's head upon your arm, mourning over him—there were those who saw that dead man walking alive with your own brother five minutes before; and fierce were the looks and sharp the words between them. Our people never go into your courts to bear witness for or against you; but there were

words spoken and overheard that night which would have taken the charge from you and placed it where it ought to be, had those words been told again before the judge. There were words spoken which shall not be forgotten, and which may yet rise up and bear fruit that he wots not of."

Chandos Winslow laid his hand gently on her arm. "Vengeance," he said, "is a terrible passion. It is possible my brother may have injured you in times long past. I think it must be so, from much that you have said. But if so, I beseech you, seek not in any way to injure him; for in so doing, you would but render yourself more wretched than you tell me you are. You too may have done wrong—you too may have brought unhappiness on others. Forgive, if you would be forgiven. I think I know you now; and if I do, it explains much that was doubtful regarding one for whom and for whose wrongs I have deeply grieved, believing her dead full eight years ago. My brother has, I have reason to believe, wronged me too; but if

he has, I have forgiven him; and you may see that it is so when you recollect that even to save my own life I would not endanger his."

"And have you grieved for me, Chandos Winslow?" said the woman. "I knew you pitied me; but I thought not the bold, brave boy would long think of her he sought to see righted. I found sympathy and kindness with those who saved my life, and I became one of them; but I thought all the rest of the world had forgotten me. And you grieved for me! God's blessing be upon you for it; be you blest in your love, and in your fortune, and in your children; be you blessed in health of body and of heart; be your age tranquil and your death calm. But, hark! There are people calling. What can they want? It is not any of our people. They know themselves better than to make such a noise."

"It is most likely some of the people from the inn seeking me," replied Chandos. "I sent on the post-boy with orders to have

a chaise ready for Northferry; and I am so late, they may think me lost, or murdered."

"Go then, go quick," cried the woman; "do not let them come hither: and forget not in a fortnight to return."

"I will remember," answered Chandos; and bidding her adieu in a kindly tone, he left the churchyard.

It was as he thought. The people of the inn had become alarmed at his long absence, and had sent out to seek him. He gave no account of his detention, however, when he met the messengers, but merely said he had stopped a while by the way.

On his arrival at the inn, he found the chaise he had ordered at the door, ready to carry him to Northferry; but a change had come over his purpose. He paused, indeed, and meditated for a moment or two, asking himself if he could depend upon the woman's information, and considering whether it might not be better to proceed as he had at first proposed. But he speedily concluded in favour of the more impetuous

course; and, ordering the ticket to be changed, and the chaise to drive towards London, gave occasion for some marvel on the part of the landlord, at what the worthy host thought fit to call "the gentleman's queer ways."

CHAPTER IV.

THERE is a nice little country inn at Mantes, on the Seine. The rooms are plain and small, but neat; and those three which were at the end of the corridor, that is to say, a sitting-room and two bed-rooms, were occupied by an English gentleman and his valet de chambre. The English gentleman's name appeared in his passport as Mr. Somers; but the valet when he was dressing him in the morning, or serving him at dinner, which he did not trust to the waiters of the inn, called him "Sir William." This valet was an Italian, but he spoke English perfectly well; and nothing but his complexion and a very slight foreign accent betrayed that he was not a

native of Great Britain. He was a quiet, exceedingly quiet man, with none of the vivacity of the South about him; saying very little to any one, but that little of the civilest possible character. Yet there was that in his eye which seemed to say the spirit was not quite as tranquil as the body—a sharp, quick glance when anything was said, be the subject what it might; a flush when he was blamed, which supplied the place of words. He had been brought over by Sir William (then Mr.) Winslow, from Rome, three or four years before; and had remained with him ever since. His fellow-servants loved him not; and it had been observed, that if any of them ventured to offend him, that man did not remain long in Sir William's service.

Now the people of the inn remarked two or three things which they thought somewhat strange in their guest. He very seldom went out in the middle of the day, although the weather was by no means yet so warm as to render the early mornings and late evenings pleasant, or the high noon un-

pleasant. He seemed very restless, too, when he was in the house, would walk up and down the room by the hour together, or wander from his bed-room to his sitting-room and back, with unmeaning activity. Then he never read anything but a newspaper: but he was an Englishman, and that passed. He frequented no café either; and did not even go to see the three great ostriches when they were exhibited in the market-place. All this seemed very strange; but the valet held his tongue, and neither landlord, nor landlady, nor head-waiter could make anything of it. They could not find out even whether he had lost his wife or not; though such was the landlady's opinion, for he was dressed in deep mourning. The head-waiter had vague notions of his having stolen silver spoons, and being uneasy in his mind.

One morning he had either passed a very good or a very bad night, for he rose before it was light; and as soon as it was, went and walked upon the bank of the river. At a little after seven he came in again, hurried

up stairs, called loudly for Benini, his valet, did not find him, and went into his bedroom to conclude his toilet, which was only half finished when he went out. At the end of half-an-hour he was in his sitting-room, and found the cloth laid for breakfast. He rang, and his servant appeared.

"Have you got the letters and newspapers, Benini?" asked Sir William.

"No, sir," replied the man.

Sir William gave him a fierce oath, and a bad name, and asked him why the devil he had not, when he knew that his master was so anxious to see the result of that cursed trial.

"Because the post never comes in till after eight, Sir William," answered the man calmly.

"Sometimes sooner, sometimes later," replied his master; you should have gone to see when you knew I was impatient for news. Go directly, and do not let me find you grow negligent, or, by ——! I will send you packing back to your beggarly country a great deal faster than you came out of it."

The gleam came up in the man's eyes; but he answered nothing, and went quietly to the post-office.

In five minutes he came back again, without either letters or newspapers. The post from Paris had not come in. Sir William ordered breakfast, and told him to go again, and wait till he could bring the packets. The man went, and was absent an hour. Either he or the post had resolved to punish Sir William's impatience. It might be either; for assuredly there is a perversity about fate in regard to letters, which makes those most desired tarry by the way, those least longed for come quick and unexpected. When he did come he brought several letters and two newspapers; but it was the latter which were first opened. The first and second pages of the voluminous sheet were passed over unread, and part of the third; but then Sir William's eye fastened upon the tall column, and with a straining gaze he went on to read the defence in the case of the crown against Chandos Winslow. Rapidly he ran the

whole over, and his face lighted up with joy. His name had never been mentioned; the defence was an alibi; his brother had him not in his power. Chandos could not pretend to have witnessed anything when he had proved that he was far from the spot; and Sir William started up with joy and relief, saying aloud, "This is excellent!" Then seeing the eye of the valet coldly fixed upon him, he added, "You will be glad to hear, Benini, that my brother is acquitted. He has shown that he was at a distance when the murder was committed, by the evidence of Mr. Fleming and his servant—perfectly unimpeachable—and I have no longer the dread of having my name coupled with that of a felon, in such near relationship. I shall go back to England directly: so get ready, and order horses at eleven."

"I am very glad to hear such news, indeed, Sir William," said the Italian; "I knew Mr. Winslow was not guilty."

The words struck his master, and raised a momentary fear. "I knew Mr. Winslow

was not guilty!" he repeated to himself, when the man had retired. "How could he know? Pooh! it was only his foreign way of speaking! Now, dear Emily, in a few short hours you shall be mine!" and he proceeded to read the letters he had received. The two first he merely glanced at; the third he read attentively. "Ha!" he cried; "Mr. Tracy arrested! It is lucky the mortgage is perfect. The man, Bond, run away with all the shares; and this fair, cold Emily a beggar! It matters not. By Heaven! with such charms as hers, she has wealth beyond the Indies. That swelling bosom, that proud, pouting lip, those glorious limbs, are worth a diadem. Aye! and the liquid eyes, too, were they not so cold! I will put fire into those dark orbs, give me but time! We can surely have the horses by ten."

There was no difficulty; the post had little to do in the spring of the year; the carriage was soon ready, the horses too, the town of Mantes left behind; Rouen, Dieppe, reached, and then the town of Brighton. It looked

gay and cheerful, with all its lights lighted, and its population in motion, on a fine spring night, and the broad ocean rolling dark and heavy along the shore. The fly was ordered to the York, and Sir William Winslow walked into the nice rooms ready for him, thinking still of Emily Tracy. Every man's mind is a web of which one fixed and predominant idea forms the woof, while other threads cross and recross it. With him the intense and vehement passion for the fair girl whom he could hardly call his bride, was the foundation of all his thoughts, as soon as the apprehension springing from present peril of death and disgrace was removed. That passion had been quelled and kept down for a time; but, like a fire upon which a load of cold and heavy matter has been thrown, it burst forth again with more vehement flame than ever, the moment it made its way through. Remorse chequered it; vague, indefinite fears wove strange figures in the web: but still the eager passion ran through all. When he felt himself on English ground again, a cer-

tain degree of trepidation seized him; and he remained in his handsome sitting-room at the York, dull and heavy for some time. His dinner at first would not down, and it needed several glasses of Madeira and a pint of champagne to help him through the meal. But then he grew quite gay again, and went out to take a stroll in the town. He went into a library, and took share in a raffle, and came back to set off early the next morning for London. His mood was gay and happy, though an occasional touch of gloom crossed it; but at all events it seemed to encourage his valet to ask him for his quarter's wages, which were not due for four or five days. The baronet, however, paid the money readily, and that appeared to encourage the man still further.

"I hope, Sir William," he said; "you will consider the difference between wages here and in Italy, and will make a small advance in mine."

"Why, you damned vagabond," cried his master; "I give you half as much again

as most English gentlemen give their servants."

"I thought, sir, considering the circumstances," replied the valet; "you might be pleased to allow me a little advance."

"Considering the circumstances!" cried his master. "I know not what circumstances you mean; but depend upon it you will not have a penny more from me."

The man bowed without reply; but in a minute or two he re-entered with one of his master's morning coats over his arm. The right sleeve was turned inside out, and he said, "Please, Sir William, what am I to do with this coat. There are two or three spirts of blood upon it, which it had fresh when you dressed for dinner on the fifth of February. I have got them out of the cloth, but the water has soaked them through into the lining."

Sir William Winslow's face grew as pale as death, and then flushed again, as he saw the man's cool, clear, dark eye fixed upon it. For an instant he did not reply; but

then he said, "I remember, my nose bled several times in the spring. It does not matter; leave it as it is."

The man folded it up, and laid it on a chair; and the next morning, before they set off for town, his master himself began upon the subject of wages. Benini was very moderate in his views; but before the conversation was ended his wages were nearly doubled.

Sir William Winslow seated himself in his carriage, with the comfortable feeling, that the man who had such wages would be a fool to deprive himself of such a master; but he recollected that he had played the fool too—at least he thought so. "I ought to have told the whole story at once," he said to himself. "The man insulted me, and I struck him with the first thing at hand—harder than I intended; but after all it was but a scuffle. If I had had the presence of mind to state the facts at once, the inquest must have brought it in *chance medley*." He forgot that juries sometimes inquire into motives

too, and might have asked whether the insult Mr. Roberts offered was not the telling of too dangerous a truth. With the servant silenced, however, by an annuity for secrecy, he thought the only grounds even for a suspicion buried in oblivion; but nevertheless there came across him a vague conviction, that he was for life a bondman to his own valet.

It was but the beginning of unpleasant sensations; but that was enough. Man is a strange animal; but there is an inherent love of freedom in his heart which is often the source of very high and noble actions—sometimes of actions the reverse of high and noble. The lightest chain upon the once free limb, how it galls and presses! but what is the shackle of steel upon the body, to the chain upon the mind? To find the spirit a serf, the thoughts manacled! that is to be a slave indeed. No custom can lighten the load of those fetters, no habit render them less corroding, nought can harden us to their endurance. On the contrary, every hour, every

minute that we bear them, the burden grows more oppressive; and Sir William Winslow felt it, as his carriage rolled on, and he groaned in bitterness of spirit.

CHAPTER V.

SMALL progress is made in post-chaises across country at night. On the public high road it may do very well. One may go from London to York as fast as Turpin, even without a railroad; but from county town *A* to county town *B*, you had better wait for daylight. So did Chandos Winslow find it; and it was broad day when he reached the fine old town of Salisbury. As he got out of the chaise, he inquired if there were not a coach to the railroad. The answer was, that it had gone by ten minutes. There was another three hours after; but the waiter informed him, that the light coach, the Hero, direct to London, set out for town in an hour, and beat the rail

by an hour and a half; (the landlord was a proprietor of the Hero;) and upon this assurance being reiterated from various quarters, Chandos, though not very fond of heros, determined to try this specimen of the class, as he thought it very likely that the promised enterprise would be achieved. His finances, also, were not in a flourishing condition. For the first time in life he was obliged to calculate shillings: the Hero was a far cheaper conveyance than the railroad and coach combined; and after having ordered and obtained some breakfast, he got upon the top of the stage, and was driven away on the road to London.

The number of passengers was very scanty; but some one had monopolized the box; and Chandos was obliged to take up his position on the roof, with a stout countryman on one side, a grazier by trade, who was full of the famous cause which had just come off, as he termed it, at S——. Chandos certainly gave him no encouragement; but when bottles are filled too full they will run over; and his en-

tertainment for the next twenty miles was his own trial for felony. He had the satisfaction, however, of finding a stout partisan in the good grazier, who declared that he had been sure from the first the young gentleman was innocent; for didn't he pay the fine two years before for Matthew Green, the farmer's son, who was brought up for killing some pheasants upon his father's farm? The reasoning did not seem quite conclusive to Chandos, even in his own defence; but he knew that he was not guilty of murder, and was glad to find that a good action could live a day beyond its date.

It was dark when the coach rolled into London, for it was not heroic as to time; and the crowded streets, the blaze of gas-lamps, the illuminated shops with their wide crystal fronts, and the multitudes pouring hither and thither, each busy with his particular selfishness, had a strange effect upon one who, for so many days preceding, had been engrossed with the weighing of his own life and death in the mere chance-balance of a court of justice.

If there were any in all the masses of human mites he saw who had ever heard of him, it was but as the prisoner in the felon's dock; and by this time they had forgotten, and thought of him no more.

His own case had, in his eyes, seemed of immense importance not many hours before. It had connected itself, in his imagination, with the general administration of justice: it seemed to affect millions in its chances and results. But now, in the midst of that wide ocean of life, and feelings, and interests, all separate, all alone, yet all connected with each other, it lost its magnitude, and seemed small and insignificant in the diversified infinite around. "Birch, pastry-cook;" "Gobble, mercer;" "Walker, fishmonger;" what was the trial of Chandos Winslow to them? A tart, a yard of silk, a red mullet, was of much more importance to each. And what more did care any of the many who rushed past like ripples on a quick stream? Verily there is truth in the saying, that the greatest solitude is in multi-

tudes; for there each man raises a thorny hedge of selfishness around him, which excludes every other human being except the few for whom he will be pleased to open the wicket.

On arriving at the dull-looking inn where the coach stopped, the young wanderer paid his fare, sought a bed-room, removed the dusty garments in which he had travelled, and set out for the other end of the town. As he passed through some small, quiet squares of smoked brick houses, and escaped from the pressure of the multitude, Chandos, for the first time, began to ask himself, what was the object of his visit, and what the excuse he was to make for so speedy an appearance at General Tracy's house. He went to see Rose Tracy—to hear of her, if not to see her. But what could he say when he did see her? How was he to act towards her?—how towards her uncle and her father? Though Mr. Tracy might be ruined, yet Emily and Rose were the co-heiresses of their uncle, a man of ample

fortune; and Chandos could not shut his ears to the question, Was he—just tried for murder, and acquitted on evidence which must soon be proved to have been given in error—he whose pittance, originally so small, had been further diminished by an expensive trial—was he in a position to ask the hand or seek the promise of one of General Tracy's nieces? He found it difficult to answer. Then he inquired what he should assign as his motive for following the family at once to London; and he thought of many things, but at length determined to trust to chance, as, perhaps, was the wisest plan.

Ah! that chapter of accidents, with its manifold pages, how often do its magic spells relieve poor mortals from their greatest difficulties! What wonders has it not done for every man! Which man amongst us, if he were to look back through life with sane and scrutinizing eyes, would not find that far more than one-half of all his successes—far more than one-half of all his reverses—far more than one-half of all that

has befallen him in life, is attributable to that broad chapter of accidents, and not to his own efforts, his own errors, or his own forethought.

Chandos Winslow walked up Green-street, at length; and then the question became, which is General Tracy's house? He fixed upon one, and rang the right-hand bell. An unknown and powdered servant appeared, and informed him very civilly, (for Chandos Winslow's appearance was not easily to be mistaken for anything but that of a gentleman,) that the house was Lord ——'s; but he added the information that was wanted. General Tracy's abode, he said, was about ten doors further up, nearer to the Park: the gentleman would see a small brass-plate upon the door. Chandos soon found the door and the brass-plate, and as that house still possessed a knocker, he knocked. The door was opened by the General's old servant, who had been with him at Northferry; and the man almost started, certainly gazed with wonder, when

he saw the well-known face which presented itself. He was an elderly man, whose wits when they once got into that state which I must call "stirred-up," did not easily settle again; and in his ideas regarding Chandos Winslow, there was some confusion. In his eyes Chandos was, according to the happy figure of a celebrated lady, "three gentlemen in one;" namely, Acton, the gardener, Sir William Winslow's brother, and the prisoner upon trial for the murder of Mr. Roberts; and there was in the man's air and manner a mixture of all the expressions which those three personages were severally calculated to call up—there was familiarity, there was respect, there was consternation.

"Lord, Mr. Acton!" he exclaimed, "is that you? Well, I am very glad to see you, sir; Lord 'a mercy! only to think!"

"Is General Tracy, at home?" asked Chandos, in a somewhat agitated tone.

"No, sir," replied the man; "he has gone with Mr. Tracy to a meeting of the

lawyers; but the young ladies are upstairs, and I am sure they will be glad to see you."

"Pray, tell them I am here," said Chandos; and the man went up to the drawing-room accordingly. In a minute after, he came half-way down, and, looking over, desired Chandos to walk up. With a quick step he did so, and was ushered into the drawing-room, where he found those two beautiful girls, both somewhat pale, and both somewhat agitated. Emily remained upon the sofa; but Rose, with her lip quivering, and tears in her eyes, advanced to meet him.

"Oh, I am so glad to see you," she said, holding out her hand. "This is very kind of you, indeed, to come so soon."

Chandos could not refrain; he pressed his lips upon the hand she gave him; and then turned his eyes for a moment to the face of Emily, to see if the act surprised her. She only smiled kindly. Chandos saw at once from her eyes, that the two

sisters trusted each other; and a restraint was at once removed.

"I am very happy, indeed, to see you, Mr. Winslow," said Emily; "for till this morning we have been sadly anxious about you; and poor Rose nearly ill with apprehension."

She too gave him her hand, as she spoke; but Chandos did not kiss it. Yet Emily was quite satisfied.

It would be difficult to detail what followed; for it was but a confused crowd of questions and answers, in all of which appeared the deep interest which the parties took in each other.

Chandos found that they were already acquainted with all the details of the trial; for the whole family had devoured rather than read the report, which had appeared in the evening papers. They spoke not of the particulars, indeed; and, with them, Chandos was not inclined to dwell upon the subject; but it was evident and gratifying to him, that not one of all Mr. Tracy's family

had felt a doubt of his innocence. Yet whenever the matter was named, the conversation became strange and vague; so much so, indeed, that had any person unacquainted with them been a witness of what passed, he might have supposed, had it not been for the warmth of manner displayed, that a suspicion had existed and still lingered. There was a cloudy sort of doubt, indeed, which overshadowed the minds of both those fair girls, but a doubt which attached not in the least degree to Chandos Winslow. In the mind of Rose, that doubt amounted almost to a certainty; and some words which she had incautiously dropped in her agonizing suspense as to the result of the trial, had communicated suspicions to her sister, less defined, but more painful, than those which she herself entertained. With Chandos, of course, there was no doubt; he knew the truth too well; but all the horror of that truth seemed to present itself more strongly to his imagination, when he sat in the presence of poor Emily, and recollected the tie,

imperfect as it was, which bound her to his brother.

At length, after about a quarter of an hour had passed, Emily rose, saying, with a smile, "I will leave you a little; for I know you must have much to say to each other. My father and my uncle will soon be back, and then I will join you again."

When she was gone, a few minutes were given to tenderness. Dark and sad events are skilful pioneers for love and confidence. They hew down in no time all the barriers of restraint and reserve, and leave the way free for heart to approach heart, unresisted.

But Chandos Winslow felt that in deep enjoyment they were losing moments precious for explanation: and at length he turned the conversation, somewhat abruptly, perhaps, to his own situation, in relation to herself.

"I see, dearest Rose," he said, "that you have made a confidant of your sister, and I am delighted that it is so; but I must not let my hopes carry me too far,

and lead me to believe that the pain and anxiety which you must have suffered, have driven you to communicate all that is between us to your father and your uncle."

"I did not know that I might, Chandos," she answered: "in the dreadful state of suspense and anguish in which your trial placed me, I could not, indeed, refrain from sharing my thoughts with poor Emily. Thus much, however, I thought myself bound to tell my father—that I had known your real name from the moment you came to Northferry—that we had met before, and passed one long, happy day together; but that you had exacted from me a promise not to betray you, because you particularly wished your brother not to know where you were. My father asked but one question, which was, whether I believed I was myself in any degree the cause of your coming to Northferry? I replied, certainly not; for that I had every reason to believe you did not know that I was there, or was his daughter. This seemed

to satisfy him perfectly; but indeed he has had so many painful things to think of, that I do not wonder at his giving no further attention to the subject. With my uncle, it is very different; for I am sure he suspects, if he does not know the whole. You have heard, of course, the sad change of fortune we have met with. My father is at liberty now, on what they call bail, I believe; but I tremble every moment, for what each ensuing day may produce. It is supposed, that the man who has carried away all the shares, and bonds, and papers of that kind, does not intend to sell them; as there would be difficulty and danger in so doing, even in a foreign country; but is likely to negociate with my father for the restitution, in consideration of a sum of money, and indemnity for the past. Nothing has been heard of him, however; and in the meantime it is ruin to my father."

"Has no part of his course been traced, dear Rose?" asked Chandos.

"It was at first supposed he had gone

to the Continent," replied his fair companion; "but every inquiry has been made at the passport offices, and no trace of a person of his peculiar appearance can be found at any of those places. They now fear that he may have escaped to America."

"He is not a man to be mistaken," said Chandos: "I saw him once when I was travelling up to London in January; and in the public carriage itself he could not refrain from making use of your father's name to entrap others. He tempted even me, Rose, poor as I am: and those words bring me, dear girl, to matters which had better be spoken of at once—spoken of even between you and me, although, perhaps, it is strange to mention them to you at all—."

"Tempted you, Chandos!" exclaimed Rose Tracy. "Oh! I hope he did not succeed."

"Oh, no!" answered her lover; "but yet I was in a degree tempted. I was going to London, with my thoughts full of Rose Tracy, with my heart full of passionate attachment.

I felt that under the will of my father, which had been proved, my means were far too small, without some great exertion on my own part, to justify me in pretending to her hand; and at the very moment when I was thinking of how I could mend my broken fortunes—by what effort, by what scheme, however bold, I could acquire a position which would give me even hope, this man crossed me with visioned promises of speedy wealth. But a moment's reflection on the means, a moment's examination of the man himself, dispelled the illusion. Now, however, dear Rose, it behoves me to put the same questions to myself which I then put. I am not richer, but poorer; all I have on earth is but a pittance, barely enough to maintain myself in the rank of a gentleman. What will your father, what will your uncle say, if I presume to tell them of my love, and ask for it their countenance and approbation?"

Rose leaned her head upon her hand, and her eyes filled with tears; but she answered at length, "You must tell them, at all events,

Chandos. You cannot tell, you cannot imagine the pain—the agony of mind which the concealment I have already practised has brought upon me—innocent and justifiable as I thought it. Oh! Chandos, for my sake you must abandon all further disguise."

"For your sake, dear Rose, I would do anything," replied Chandos Winslow; "but of course you do not wish me to enter upon the subject to-night. To-morrow I must go into the city to sell out a part of my small portion, in order to pay the expenses of the late trial. I must also see my friend, Sir ——, who so nobly and ably defended me. He seems to entertain a belief —on which, however, I would not found the slightest hope—that a subsequent will of my father's may either be recovered, or the intention of it proved, or something of the kind —I really do not exactly know what; and that I may be thereby enabled to stop the sale of Winslow Abbey."

Rose started; but ere she could explain the effect which such a step, if it were prac-

ticable, might have upon the fortunes of her father, a carriage drew up to the house, and there was a footman's knock at the door. Emily immediately joined them, and it was evident that she had been weeping. Chandos knew not his strange position: but could he have seen into the hearts of those two fair girls, what would he have beheld?—That the one rejoiced at his acquittal of a crime she knew he had not committed, yet saw therein the prospect of misery to herself by the probable consequence of his brother's return to England; that the other, while she could not but hope that he might establish his rights, whatever they were, feared that her own father's utter ruin would be thereby consummated.

The next moment General Tracy and his brother entered the room. Mr. Tracy's face bore evident marks of the mental suffering he had endured and was enduring. The tranquil, well-satisfied, somewhat self-sufficient air was gone; and there was a look of sadness, bordering on the morose, in its

place. No man likes to find himself a fool; and most men try to prevent others from discovering the same fact, or at all events to hide their own mental assent thereunto, by assuming a cold pride which will not bate a jot of its dignity. Thus, though he was shaken and evidently enfeebled in frame, he walked into the room with as stately a step as if he had never committed a folly in his life.

General Tracy, on the contrary, was unchanged either in person or demeanour. There was the stout, soldier-like, upright form; there was the warm, rosy complexion; there was the frank, straightforward bearing, and the warm, good-humoured smile, betokening the cheerful disposition, so charming in an old man. He walked straight up to Chandos Winslow and shook him heartily by the hand, saying, "Delighted to see you, my young friend. None have taken a deeper interest in late events than we have done in this small house; though it was impossible for any of us to be down at S——.

None have more rejoiced that you have had fair play shown, and justice done you; for that was all we feared—that some of the quirks and quibbles of the law, some of the follies or obstinacies of jurymen, might make wrong seem right."

Mr. Tracy also held out his hand to his former gardener, but it was more coldly; and he only said, "I can assure you, Mr. Winslow, I never entertained the slightest doubt regarding you, and rejoice much that you have been able so fully to justify the opinion every one entertained of you; though why you thought fit to play gardener for so many months, I have not yet been able to divine."

"That will be easily explained, Mr. Tracy," replied Chandos; "and to explain it is one of the great objects of my coming here directly after the trial. The facts are simply these: I had long entertained a strong desire —a whim if you please to call it—to see the poorer classes nearer than a rich man can usually see them. A good many years ago,

a very severe dispute occurred between my brother and myself, into the particulars of which I need not enter. Whoever was in fault, it left a coldness between us which never decreased. When my father's will was read, I found that he had made me a dependent on my brother, as far as it was in his power to do so. I was not disposed to be dependent upon any man, nor to be under any obligation to one with whom I was not on good terms. I expressed my determination—I trust, in no ungentlemanly manner—to receive nothing from my brother; and a sharp altercation ensued, which ended in my leaving a house that had become his. A small property had been left me some time before by a relation; my father had added by his will a very valuable library and some fine pictures. With these I might either have limited my ambition to what I had, or I might have opened for myself a new career; but I accidentally heard, immediatety after I quitted my brother's house, that you were seeking a head-gardener. I

had for four or five years taken upon myself the entire superintendence of the fine gardens at Elmsly, and my old whim of descending for a time from the station in which I was born, and mingling with the poorer classes of the people, as one of themselves, came back upon me. I had no knowledge that in your daughter I should meet one who had known me in a different rank of life; for the scenes where we had formerly met were so different from the quiet seclusion of Northferry, that the identity of the name of my fair acquaintance with that of the gentleman whose service I sought, never struck me. I feel, however, Mr. Tracy, that I owe you an apology for having deceived you as to who I was; but you will clearly see that I had no hope of carrying out my scheme with any one, unless my name and station were concealed."

"A curious whim, indeed," said General Tracy; "and one which has had very serious results. Nevertheless, I can perfectly understand the feelings in which it was con-

ceived, my young friend; for it is a sort of thing I have often entertained an idea of myself, without having ever had the spirit to carry it out. I dreamed of it even as a boy, when reading the adventures of the disguised Haroun al Raschid."

"I never had such visions," said Mr. Tracy; "nor do I think that the enterprise would answer at all the object for which it was undertaken. A man who descends, either voluntarily or involuntarily, from a higher to a lower station in life, carries his own world of habits, thoughts, feelings, and prejudices with him; and sees through the same discoloured spectacles, though he may see a little nearer. But I cannot afford to discuss such things to-night; for, to say the truth, I am weary and harassed."

Chandos received the last words as a somewhat broad and not very civil hint to go, and accordingly rose and took his hat; but General Tracy stopped him, saying, "Stay a minute, stay a minute; I want to talk to you about two or three things, Win

slow: first, I must know where you are to be found; next, when we shall see you again."

"I am, for to-night, the denizen of a very unfashionable part of the world," replied Chandos, "and under the auspices of a somewhat strange-looking monster, called the Swan with Two Necks, in Lad-lane; but to-morrow I shall be at the —— Hotel, in Cork-street. A man who has been tried for murder will, of course, be an object of curiosity and remark for a few days; and I wish to get it over as soon as possible."

"You are right," said the General; "but come down into the dining-room, and let me talk to you about one or two things connected with that same trial. Arthur, I suppose you will be gone to bed before I come up. Good night!" and, taking up a light, the old officer led the way down.

Chandos bade adieu to the rest of the party, warmly in some cases, somewhat coolly in another, and followed. When they were below the General closed the door, and then

shook his young companion by the hand again, saying, "I congratulate you from the heart at the issue of the trial, though that issue was brought about by means to me totally unexpected."

"Not more so to you than to myself, General," replied Chandos Winslow, frankly; "that is to say, if you mean the evidence of Mr. Fleming and his servant. Nor will I conceal from you for a moment, that the whole of that evidence was false—under an error, I am quite sure; but none the less false. I was not at Northferry at all that night after I returned to my own cottage. Mr. Fleming must have mistaken Lockwood, my half-brother, a natural son of my father's, for me. Indeed, the likeness, I believe, is very great."

"It is strange," said General Tracy, musing; and Chandos continued: "Most strange! That the evidence which saved my life should be as false as the accusation against me, is very curious indeed. Had I known what Mr. Fleming was called for

before he appeared, I would not have suffered it; although I believe, had it not been for his testimony, I should have been condemned for an act of which I am as innocent as yourself; for, if you remark, there was but one circumstance which could raise a reasonable doubt in my favour: that of the servant lad, Michael Burwash, who saw some one return from the grounds into the house after poor Roberts had crossed the lawn."

"Do you know who that was?" asked General Tracy, quickly.

Chandos was silent; and the old officer added: "It was your own brother. You owe me that lad's evidence, Winslow; for, as soon as I returned to Northferry, after seeing you in prison, I examined all the servants myself, and sent word to your lawyer, that Burwash had acknowledged the important fact you have mentioned. I then gave up some time to an investigation of who the person could be who had come in so late, and by such an unusual entrance. My brother was at home at the time, I found. I was

absent. None of the servants would think of entering by the Green-house. On inquiring of Emily, whose room was opposite to that where Sir William Winslow slept, I found that she recollected having heard his door shut sharply just before she rang for lights. Further, I found that he was very late down at dinner that day; that he was agitated and strange in his manner; complained of having over fatigued himself, and being unwell; and at length sent for old Woodyard, and was bled. Since then, however, Rose has acknowledged to me, that when speaking with you at the basin of gold-fish, she heard your brother's voice, in the grounds, raised loud. After that I had no doubt that Sir William was the person who returned in so curious a manner—more I am not justified in saying."

Still Chandos was silent, and sat with his eyes bent down upon the Turkey carpet; and after gazing at him for a moment, General Tracy turned abruptly to another part of the subject.

"That brings me," he said, "to a point which I have hitherto forgotten, Chandos, though it is one which should have been first remembered. I have not yet thanked you, my dear young man, for the delicacy and kindness you have shown in not calling Rose as a witness. She was prepared to do her duty firmly; and when she spoke to me upon the subject, I advised her to write to you and say so; but it is not necessary to tell you what a painful task it would have been for her. You must feel—indeed, you have shown you feel it; and I thank you deeply for your consideration in this matter."

"I would not have had her called for the world," answered Chandos; "I know what a frightful thing to a woman must be a cross-examination in a court of justice. If the opposite party called her, I could not, of course, help it; but then I could have ensured—at least, I trust so—that she was subject to no pain by the cross-examination of my own counsel; and that was something."

"Everything," answered the General;

"and it seems strange to me that they did not call her."

"All things concerned with the trial were strange," said Chandos. "I suppose in this instance the lawyers were well aware that your niece's evidence was not likely to suit their purpose; for, I am sorry to say, it was but too evident that the object of the counsel for the prosecution was to get a verdict against me."

"I remarked it, I remarked it," said General Tracy; "and, I am sorry to say, I have seen the same very often in criminal cases. Man is a beastly animal, my young friend, and the cause of half his brutality is vanity. It was so here, and is so always. A counsel does not choose to be beaten; and he moves heaven and earth, not so much to hang the prisoner, as to triumph over his opponents. But it must all seem very strange to you now, sitting here quietly in this dining-room, to think that, only yesterday you were made the sport of circumstances which held your life continually in the balance."

"Like a dream," answered Chandos Winslow; "and by no means a pleasant one."

"Well, it is happy, at all events, that the dream has ended so well," rejoined the old officer; "you have come off with flying colours; and although we are in sad tribulation here just now, from circumstances which you have no doubt heard of, you must come and dine with me, and we will have a long chat upon other affairs, which must be spoken of before we have done. Can you come to-morrow?"

"I fear not," answered his young companion. "I shall be the greater part of the day in the city; and have, besides, to consult lawyers upon matters greatly affecting my interests, although I much fear that no good will result from our consultations."

"Don't plunge into law! don't plunge into law!" said the General, shaking his head ruefully. "I declare, I would rather lose all I have, than to get into a law-suit about it. The roguery and folly of the world, are the fields from which lawyers reap their harvests; and a plentiful crop

they get. In England, at least, there is as much philosophy as charity in that passage of the Bible which says, 'If a man take your cloak, give him your coat also;' for if you go to law with him, hang me, if those human sharks, the lawyers, do not contrive to get your breeches into the bargain. But can you come the day after to-morrow then?"

Chandos assented, and, the hour being fixed at half-past seven, took his leave, and returned to his inn in the city. The chamber assigned to him was large and gloomy: the wainscoted walls were covered, besides the paint, with the smoke and dust of half a century; the bed in the far corner rose tall and ghastly, in curtains of brown moreen; and the hangings at the windows had acquired a hue which can only be given by long immersion in a London atmosphere. There was a feeling of foul misery about the whole, which fell depressing upon the spirit of Chandos Winslow. It was much more like poverty and wretchedness than the gardener's cottage

at Northferry. He thought of Rose Tracy; he recalled her father's cold and repulsive manner; he inquired of his own heart if it were possible to ask her to share poverty with him; to expose her to all the ills of penury, the daily cares and grinding inconveniences of narrow means, and to bind down her free spirit, unaccustomed to a want unsatisfied, a wish unfulfilled, in the hard chain of straitened circumstances. Chandos Winslow would not answer the question; but his heart sunk as he propounded it to himself: and he went to bed weary of the working-day world and the battle of anxious thought.

CHAPTER VI.

THE next was a busy day with Chandos Winslow. His first occupation was to sell out a sum sufficient to pay the costs of the late trial, as far as he was able to calculate them, from the rough data which he had received. He added thereunto, two hundred and fifty pounds, for his current expenses; and having arranged that affair, and placed the money in his banker's hands, he proceeded to seek the friend who had so ably pleaded his cause. From his house, he was sent to his chambers; from his chambers, to a court of law, where he found him, wigged and gowned, in the midst of a long and laborious argu-

ment, which seemed likely never to come to an end. After enduring full two hours, however, the speech was concluded; and Chandos, sending his card, obtained a moment's interview with his friend. Sir —— shook him warmly by the hand, saying rapidly, "Come to me at nine to-night, Winslow: I cannot stay with you now; for I must hear what the gentlemen opposite have to say. Don't eat much dinner; for I shall eat nothing till then."

"At your own house, or at your chambers?" asked Chandos.

"At chambers, at chambers," said the barrister, turning to go back into the court. "I shall not get home till two. Our lives are not easy ones."

It was now about four o'clock; and, with feelings difficult to describe, but to which he was resolved not to yield, Chandos Winslow proceeded to call upon several of his most intimate acquaintances. It required an effort to knock at the first door. The feeling of having stood in the felon's dock, was

strong upon him. The uncertainty of the reception he should meet with; the knowledge that, with a mind which has the slightest tincture of vulgarity—that is to say, with nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine persons out of every million—an accusation, however false, leaves some stain; he felt irritable and impatient beforehand, at the idea of being treated coldly at a moment when he felt that society owed him something, for having inflicted on him undeserved hardships.

Luckily he had chosen well in the person whom he had selected for his first visit. She was the widow of a nobleman who had been distinguished for many virtues himself; and she was mild, kind, and charitable, though not without a certain degree of dignified stateliness, which showed that she felt her high station, without the slightest touch of pride. She received her young visitor almost as if nothing had happened. I say, *almost*, because there was the least possible

difference in the warmth of her reception. It was more cordial, less tranquil, than it might have been under ordinary circumstances. She rose from her seat more quickly, held out her hand, and said, "Oh, Mr. Winslow, is that really you? Well, this is very kind of you, to call upon me so soon. Now sit down, pray, and tell me all about yourself, and what you are going to do; how long you are to be in London, and all."

Chandos was soon at his ease; and he thought, "With some few friends such as this, I can afford to set the general world at nought. About twenty minutes passed very pleasantly; and then he rose to proceed to another house. His reception there was very different: the whole family was cold; and he stayed not ten minutes. Then again, at the next place, he heard the owner of the house, even after he had been admitted to the drawing-room, tell the servant from a neighbouring chamber to say that he had made a mistake,

and that his master was out. When the man re-entered to utter the prescribed lie Chandos had his hat on his head, and was walking towards the door: "You may spare yourself, my good man," he said, bowing his head haughtily, "I have heard the whole," and he walked out of the house, never to enter it again.

He made one other call. The lady of the house was at home, and delighted to see him. She talked to him incessantly of his trial, declared that it was the funniest and most delightful thing that had ever happened; and invited him to a ball, where all the great people in London were to be present.

Chandos had no inclination to be exhibited as a felon-lion; and did not promise to go.

At nine o'clock precisely, Chandos was at his friend's chambers, and found him alone, with a table spread for two, in a little dull room. A note-book and some stray papers lay on one side of the table! and the moment after the young gentleman

had entered, a servant brought in a tray, with soup and several other dishes upon it, sent from some neighbouring hotel.

"Now, Winslow, sit down," said the barrister, "and we will talk as we eat; for I can afford but one hour for repose and refreshment to day." The servant uncovered the dishes, and instantly disappeared. The barrister took his place, helped his guest and himself to soup; and between each spoonful, looked at the papers and notes beside him, without apology. As soon as the soup was done, he rang a bell, which was tied by a string to his chair; and while the servant took away the plates, and handed some cutlets to his master's guest, the great lawyer rubbed his temple with one finger, in a profound reverie. The servant then disappeared, without venturing to disturb his master's meditations by presenting the dish; and the next moment the barrister roused himself, saying, "Come, Winslow, a glass of wine, and then I will tell you what you must do. I think you

must take a solicitor with you, and go down very quietly into the neighbourhood of Winslow Abbey. The first person you had better see is your good friend, Lockwood. Let him dictate to the solicitor everything he knows regarding certain papers found by Mr. Roberts, at the Abbey. He will do it willingly enough, I am sure. Then you must get hold of a young gentleman, whose relationship to yourself, or connexion with your family, I do not know; but his name is—let me see—Faber."

"Oh! poor Faber," said Chandos; "he is a good young man, but weak; and as to his relationship with me, I believe it is very much the same as Lockwood's."

He spoke with a faint smile, and his friend laughed, saying, "Well then, you must exercise your brotherly influence over him, for the purpose of inducing him to give a full, true, and particular account of all he knows concerning these papers, and of a will, made five years posterior to the one proved, but which has not yet appeared."

Chandos mused for a moment, and the barrister took another glass of wine. "I am afraid," said the former, at length, "that Faber will not be easily induced to speak. He certainly loves me better than he does my brother. He has been with me more, is kind and well disposed; but still his is one of those characters on which the stern and determined work easily, and which may be led to wrong those whom they love best, for the sake of those whom they fear. I have seen him actually shake in my brother's presence; and I do not think he dare utter a word which would offend Sir William Winslow, even if he were at a thousand miles' distance."

"If he is only to be moved by sternness and determination, you must be stern and determined, too," said his friend; "you can be so when you like, I know, Winslow."

"But Faber will never believe I shall prove so to him," answered Chandos: "I may threaten; but he will trust to my regard for him to render my threats of no avail."

"At all events, you must try every means

to make him speak," rejoined Sir ——; "for his testimony might be very important. He was present, it seems, when Mr. Roberts found, in a drawer of the library, a memorandum, in your father's handwriting, of his having given the last will, which he made about five years ago, into the keeping of your brother."

"Indeed!" said Chandos. "This is new to me. But if we have not the will itself, I suppose the memorandum will be of little avail."

"Unsupported, of course, it will be of none at all," replied his friend; "but I find that when the memorandum was discovered, Faber showed so much agitation, that those who witnessed it were led to suspect that he knew more of what had become of the will than he chose to acknowledge. At all events, you must try every means with him; and having got all the information you can from those two sources, I would advise you to cross the country to see Mr. Roberts's executor, and endeavour to obtain an inspection of his

papers. If amongst them there should be found a copy of a will of that date, though not signed, or a sketch of one in your father's handwriting, and if you can prove that the other will has been lately destroyed, I think—mind, I speak doubtingly—but I think we might do something, by one means or another."

"A law-suit with a brother," said Chandos, musing, "based on an accusation of his having destroyed his father's will, and wronged his brother! It would be a terrible thing!"

"It would, indeed!" replied Sir ——; "but my hope is, Chandos, that we may not be driven to a law-suit, if we can accumulate sufficient proofs to alarm the opposite party. Take some of that Sillery, and do not let what I am going to say startle you. Mark me well, however. You have your brother's life in your hands. As soon as he has time to think, he will perceive, from the course of defence pursued on your trial, that such is the case—that a foundation is already laid, indeed, for building up a truth that would

destroy him—that you have nothing to do but to say in the ear of Justice, 'I would not let my counsel defend me at the expense of a brother's life,' and to prove that Lockwood was mistaken for you, in order to render your evidence conclusive against him. These are terrible weapons, it is true; and I would not have you use them even in menace, unless it be established to your full conviction that your brother has destroyed your father's last will, or has concealed it. Then, I think, you will be justified in demanding that right be done you, in terms which cannot be mistaken. But I do not think he has destroyed the will. Men seldom dare to commit great crimes—unless under the influence of hasty passion—when lesser ones will serve their purpose. I think the will is concealed; and if we can prove the clauses distinctly, I doubt not, under all the circumstances, a search will be made for it, and it will be found. Look here at a train of evidence that would not be pleasant for your brother to have brought for-

ward in a court, even though you used no menace in reference to the terrible facts within your own knowledge. I am already prepared to prove that Mr. Roberts came over to Northferry to inform you of his having found the memorandum I have mentioned; that your brother was at Mr. Tracy's house at the time; that some one, bearing the appearance of a gentleman, entered the house by the most private entrance, immediately after the murder; that it was not yourself, Mr. Tracy, or his brother; that the only person who could be injured by the tale Mr. Roberts had to tell was Sir William Winslow. Do you not think, Chandos, that he must have a consciousness that there are a thousand circumstances likely to be brought out in any trial, which would render the train of evidence complete against him, and bring the heavy hand of justice on his head, even if you should remain silent? Depend upon it, if he have not destroyed the will, he will speedily find it, as soon as you have collected all the proofs of its having existed, and been in his

possession; and if he have destroyed it, and you can show what were its provisions, that he will concede them all, rather than incur a suit which must entail disclosures tending to consequences more fatal. It is on this account that I advise you to go down at once, while he is still absent, and collect all the information you can get. But, in the very first place, you must enter a protest against the sale of Winslow Abbey."

"I understood that it was already sold, and the money paid," replied Chandos.

"Two-thirds of the money have been paid, I hear," replied the barrister, "upon an undertaking, under Sir William's hand, to complete the transfer within a given time. But still the transfer is incomplete; and you must show, by a caveat, that you are not a consenting party, so as to guard against even the semblance of laches on your side. Get your protest drawn up in due form by a solicitor to-morrow, have it laid before counsel for an opinion, and furnish both *vendor* and *emptor* with a copy; then set out again upon your

voyage of discovery, and let me know the result. Linger not here, fond youth, by the side of beauty; but away, in search of that which, in the present day alone, can unchain Andromeda from the rock. Depend upon it, my dear Winslow, that pretty fable of the lady upon the sea-shore, and the Gorgon-slaying Perseus, has a very unpoetic interpretation. Andromeda is the representative of a fashionable young lady; the rock, the hard state of single blessedness to which her parents chain her, in default of a suitable match; the sea-monster destined to devour her, old maidenism; and Perseus, a rich East-Indian, very bilious, who, with the sword of wealth, slays the monster, and frees the damsel from her chains, to marry her himself. And now let us empty that bottle of Sillery, and have another; for alas! in the life that I lead, I am forced to combat corporal weakness with that which saps corporal strength; and wine versus weariness is the cause I am trying every day."

Chandos Winslow remained till a few mi-

nutes after ten, and then proceeded, not to the inn which he had tenanted the night before, but to his new abode in Cork Street. What a contrast! Damask curtains, gay coloured carpets, polished mahogany, shining fire-irons, clean walls, and a bright fire! But the contrast was not greater than between his own mood that night and the mood of the night preceding. The words of his friend had relighted the lamp of Hope, of which the everlasting fire of Vesta was but a faint image.

CHAPTER VII.

How many fruitless beatings of the heart there are in the world! Whether it be from fear, anxiety, agitation, hope, anger, love, hatred, that beating of the heart is one of the most vain and useless operations which any part of the human frame performs. The heart of Chandos Winslow beat very idly at the door of General Tracy's house, in Green-street. He fancied that in about a minute and a half he would be in the presence of Rose Tracy: he painted to himself her looks, he seemed to hear her words; but when he found himself in the drawing-room, the General was there alone; and the very simple words, "Bring dinner," which

were uttered as soon as he entered, showed him as plainly as if the General had spoken an oration, that he and his host were to dine tête-a-tête. He felt a good deal disappointed; but he did not suffer his mortification to appear; and in about ten minutes he was seated at the hospitable board and partaking of a very excellent, though plain dinner. The wines were all exceedingly good, though not very various; and Sherry, of the best vintage, Madeira, which had twice seen the Cape, with Oporto, which had lived as wine in part of two centuries, supplied well the place of Champagne, of Claret, and of Burgundy.

The General suffered the meal to pass by, and also the two first glasses of wine after dinner, without touching upon anything which had a business tone in it. Chandos found that Rose, Emily, and Mr. Tracy had moved during the preceding day to that gentleman's house, in Berkeley-square.

"There is a great deal to be done there," said General Tracy; "and it is well that they should be on the spot."

Some short time after dinner, came one of those pauses which are generally produced by a slight feeling of embarrassment on both parts. Chandos was not sure whether General Tracy expected him to begin upon the subject nearest his heart, or not; and the General himself, though a very brave and determined man in most matters, shrunk a little from the commencement of a conversation, in the course of which he felt that pain might be given to one whom he liked and esteemed.

At length he forced himself to the task; and, after putting over the decanter to his guest, and rubbing his right temple for a moment, he said, "Your friend, Sir ——, made an admirable defence for you, Winslow. I could only have wished that he had omitted a few words about my pretty niece, Rose. I think it was unnecessary, and not altogether judicious."

"Had I possessed any power of stopping him," replied Chandos Winslow; "those words should never have been spoken, my dear

sir. But I very well understand the motives on which Sir —— acted. He only thought of his client's defence; and judged it was necessary to assign or hint some reason for not calling Miss Tracy on my part, as it had already appeared that she was the last person with whom I spoke before the murder. I am exceedingly grieved, however, that the slightest pain should have been inflicted upon her for my sake."

"No, no," said General Tracy; "do not vex yourself about that. I am not inclined to think that Rose has felt any pain on that account. The reason why I feel sorry, is, that what he said must force forward explanations, my young friend, which might have been better delayed. No one can accuse you, Chandos, of having acted in any way but with the most perfect delicacy, except, perhaps, in having induced Rose to conceal from her family your real rank and name, while playing gardener at Northferry."

"I trust, General Tracy," replied Chan-

dos, "that you and your brother are both perfectly well aware, I had no notion whatever, when I came to Northferry, that my London acquaintance, Miss Tracy, was a daughter of the master of the house. Had I been informed of the fact, I give you my word of honour, I should not have played gardener there at all. When I had once applied for the place, however, if I had not bound her to secrecy, of course, I must have abandoned my whole scheme."

"That certainly makes a difference," said General Tracy, with a smile; "and would make a greater difference still, if there had not been a little bit of love in the case, my young friend."

"There was none when I came there," exclaimed Chandos, eagerly; "I had but seen Miss Tracy once. I admired her, as all who see her must admire her; but I can assure you there was nothing more: though I do not mean to deny that longer acquaintance, and the circumstances in which we have been placed with regard to each

other, have changed what was then mere admiration into the most sincere and devoted attachment."

"Well, well," said General Tracy, "we will not dwell upon the past, Chandos, but rather turn to consider the future. I must enter into explanations with you, my young friend, painful for me to give, and which, in their deductions, may be painful, I fear, to you also."

"Do not tell me not to hope, General Tracy," replied Chandos, in a gloomy tone; "for that would take all power from the efforts which I am called upon to make to change a bad situation into a good one."

"Such is not at all my intention," said the old officer. "But it is necessary that your position with my sweet niece should be exactly defined; and as my brother was not willing to enter upon any explanation, I have taken it upon myself: so listen patiently. You must have heard, at least, I will take it for granted you are aware, that grave embarrassments have most suddenly

and unexpectedly fallen upon Rose's father. In short, he has acted like a great fool; and has only for his excuse, that the madness is epidemic just now. The Northferry estate was engaged for its full value, or very nearly so, to meet the first pressing difficulty some time ago. A further debt, to the amount of more than one hundred thousand pounds remained to be paid; but to meet that, he had shares which at their then value would have covered the sum within a few thousand pounds. Some of the shares fell in value; and I saw that there would be a necessity for my stepping in to his aid. I exacted from him authority, however, to sell the whole of the rubbish on which he had been spending his fortune, in order to realize as much as possible; but when I came to inquire, I found that the shares were in the hands of a broker; and two days after I discovered that this broker had absconded, carrying all with him. A reaction is taking place—several of the lines have risen much in the market. If my brother had posses-

sion of the papers, all could be cleared in an hour. But the man's retreat is not to be discovered; and though he cannot sell them himself without great danger, he has taken no steps as yet to negociate for the restitution of the property to my brother, as we supposed might be the rascal's course. In the mean while my brother was arrested and brought to London, where the action was bailed; but a threat has been held out to make him a bankrupt as a dealer—a thing most disgraceful to a gentleman. I have always been anxious to spare my brother Arthur all unnecessary pain on the subject, and willing to make any personal sacrifices for him; and, after due consideration, I yesterday made a proposal to the creditors to the following effect:—To sell my own estate; and, with the reservation of ten thousand pounds for each of the girls, and ten thousand more to buy an annuity for my own and my brother's lives, to make over to them all the proceeds, upon their giving him a release, and forbearing to strike a docket

against him, with a covenant, that if the papers respecting the shares are ever recovered, the whole shall be sold to pay off what debt may remain. It is estimated by competent persons, that what I offer, together with the proceeds of the sale of his house in town, the books, pictures, &c., will afford a dividend of about seventy per cent., and I think they will accept it. My brother will then be saved from the disgrace of a bankruptcy court; but you will remark that Rose's portion will be but ten thousand pounds."

"I think I need hardly tell you, General Tracy," replied Chandos; "that Miss Tracy's fortune was never for one moment a consideration with me. Little or great, my attachment is the same, and would remain so if she had nought but her hand to bestow."

General Tracy smiled. "You are too impetuous," he said. I can easily conceive that her fortune was no *inducement,* young gentleman; but a matter of consideration it must be both with you and me. Could I

divide all I have at this moment between my two nieces, and give Rose a portion which would enable you to live at ease, I should have no hesitation, no care; but such is not the case. She has but a small dower; you, if I mistake not, have not much more, and the amount that you could together supply would not be sufficient to maintain you in the station of life in which you have both been born. You have at present no profession, Chandos; no means of increasing your income. You must seek one—you must choose some course which will give a reasonable hope of securing competence; and then, claim the dear girl's hand if you will. I am not ambitious for my niece—I seek for her neither high nor wealthy alliance; but I have lived long enough to learn that, after health, competence is the best blessing of God. The days of love in a cottage have long passed by; and as my brother has fully authorized me to deal with this matter as I think fit, I say thus shall it be—apply yourself to find some

honourable means of supporting a lady by your own abilities in the station of a lady, and Rose Tracy's friends will oppose no obstacle; but till then, no sworn vows or solemn engagements. If you cannot trust to her affection, her affection is not worth having. If she cannot rely upon your honour, she is better without yourself."

Chandos took his hand and pressed it warmly. "So be it," he said; "but two questions more, General Tracy, What will you think sufficient to justify us in marrying?"

"I have thought of no particular income," replied the old officer. "A pursuit tha may lead to one, is the first thing. As to the rest, say five hundred a year more than you already possess together. Now for the second question."

"It is, whether you intend to refuse me her society till such a point be obtained," was Chandos Winslow's reply.

"Nay, Heaven forbid!" cried the old officer; "that were to inflict unnecessary

pain, and to take from you the best encouragement to exertion. No! I trust entirely to your honour, my young friend, that you do not pursue your suit beyond the bounds agreed upon; and, with that understanding, when she becomes the inmate of my dwelling, as will most likely soon be the case, you may see her when you please—with due moderation, Chandos—with due moderation, remember."

"You thought that what you had to say would give me pain, my dear General," answered Chandos; "but it is all I could wish or expect. I have now an object in life, now a hope to lead me on; and energetic efforts under such circumstances will not fail of success, I am sure. I have, however, other tasks before me, which I must execute in the first place, although I anticipate little success. If, therefore, you have any commands for Northferry, I am ready to perform them, as I shall be down in that neighbourhood for a fortnight to come."

"I have none," replied the General.

"Northferry and ourselves will soon, I suppose, have to part for ever; and I should have thought your connexion with that pleasant place was already severed. Alas! that it should be so. I have come to that time of life, Chandos, when the mind's food is memory. Hope is the pabulum of youth, my young friend; recollection the diet of old age: and we cling to everything that recals pleasant memories, as one of your London diner's-out attaches himself to a giver of good dinners. But what, I wonder, takes you to Northferry?"

"A wild goose chase, I believe," answered Chandos; "I would fain encourage expectation of some good resulting from it; but the hopes fade away as soon as they are born; and I go more because a good and a wise friend advises me, than from any conviction on my own part. Neither do I exactly go to Northferry; but very near it I shall certainly be, if you have any commands."

"Few, few," replied the General. "One thing, indeed, you may do, if you will; name-

ly, bring the little boy, Tim, to London with you. I must put him to a school in the neighbourhood; for even misfortune must not make me forget my given word."

Chandos promised to take all care of the boy; and the conversation turned to other subjects.

CHAPTER VIII.

Four days passed after Chandos Winslow's conference with General Tracy ere he could quit London. Lawyers are not fond of moving fast. Some difficulties occurred in drawing up the notice to be served upon Sir William Winslow and Lord Overton, regarding the sale of Winslow Abbey; and the whole arrangements were not completed till late on the fourth night. Chandos consoled himself easily, however; for during those four days he twice saw Rose Tracy; and he began to comprehend better than he had ever done before, how Mark Antony had lost a world for Cleopatra's eyes. At length, however, on the fifth morning, one of those machines

which the Londoners, in their monosyllabic propensity call a "cab," whirled him and his light portmanteau down to the railway terminus, and in two minutes after, Chandos was rolling away upon the rails towards his native place. The morning had been beautiful, dawning with a brightness and a lustre which do not always promise well for the risen day; and ere the train had reached the second station, the sky was covered with grey cloud, and a thin, fine rain was dewing the whole earth. Thicker and faster it came down as the traveller proceeded on his way, till at length when he got out, about sixty miles from town, to perform the rest of his journey by coach, a perfect deluge was pattering upon the roof of the shed under which he alighted. He had neither umbrella nor great coat; and he was glad to find an inside place disengaged, to carry him at least part of the way warm and dry.

His companions were an elderly woman, with a large basket, well furnished with sandwiches, and a wicker bottle full of gin-and-

water; and a tall, stout man, of about forty-five or forty-six, tolerably well dressed, in a long brown great-coat, and endowed with an exceedingly yellow complexion. The lady did not seem inclined for much conversation, but consoled herself from time to time for the evils of travelling by the sources of comfort which she had provided in her bottle and basket. The male traveller was somewhat more communicative, though in a peculiarly short, dry way. He saluted Chandos on his entering the coach with a "Good morning, sir;" which act of homeliness of course bespoke the rude countryman, in a land where every well-educated man demeans himself towards his neighbour as an enemy, till something occurs to make them friends. Chandos, on his part, was not in the slightest degree afraid of having his pocket picked, his character injured, or his mind contaminated; and therefore he answered his new companion civilly, and asked if he had come down by the train.

"Yes, sir," replied the other; "from a fool's errand."

"How so?" asked Chandos.

"Seeking in London what I might have found in the country, and what I did not find there," rejoined the stranger; "travelling up to look for that which travelled down with me, without looking for."

"I never could find out riddles in my life," said Chandos. "How hard it rains! I did not see you on the train."

"I saw you," answered the man: "I see everything."

"Indeed!" replied Chandos Winslow, not particularly well pleased with his companion: "then you must see a great deal that does not please you."

"Not much," said the other: "I am easily pleased. Did you see a green chariot behind the train, and a gentleman in it, and a vally —an Italian vagabond?"

Chandos started, and turned round, saying, "No. Whose carriage was it?"

"The master of Elmsly was in it," said the man.

"Indeed!" said Chandos. And, after a

moment's thought, he added, "You seem to know me, I think."

"Oh, yes; I know you quite well," replied the stranger. "I was in the court when you were tried for murder."

The old lady opposite gave a start, and exclaimed, "Lord a-mercy!" and Chandos's face flushed, partly in anger, partly in shame.

"A recollection of such things is not particularly pleasant to me," he replied, sharply.

"I don't see why not," answered his fellow-traveller. "You knew you were innocent, and you proved it to the jury. If it should be unpleasant to anybody, it is to those who accused you, and to the man who committed the murder, and would have let you be hanged for it."

Chandos made no answer, but fell into thought; and full half-an-hour passed without a word being spoken. At length the young gentleman inquired, "Are you of the town of S——?"

"No," answered the other; "I do not live in a town, I live in the country; but I hap-

pened to be there that day by accident, and I went into the court to see what was going on. It was wonderful hot; but yet I stayed it out, though I thought I should have been suffocated."

Another long pause succeeded; the man seemed determined to hunt down a subject the most disagreeable for Chandos to pursue; and therefore the young gentleman refrained from all further conversation till the coach stopped to change horses, near a spot where a road branched off towards Winslow Abbey. There Chandos alighted, and ordered his portmanteau to be carried up to a bed-room in the neat little road-side inn. The old lady and the stout, yellow-faced traveller, proceeded on their way together; and Chandos ordered some refreshment, preparatory to a long walk which he contemplated.

While the mutton-chop was in preparation, and he was taking out some necessary articles from his portmanteau, the thick veil of clouds which covered the sky became of a paler grey, and then, towards the westward, where

a wide open country extended before the windows of the inn, the edge of the vapour drew up like a curtain, showing the yellow gleam of evening between the woods and hedgerows in the distance. Before the young traveller's light meal was concluded, the rain had ceased entirely, and no trace of clouds remained upon the heaven, except some white feathery streaks of rising vapour, chequering the fresh deep blue.

Telling the people of the inn that he might not return till the following morning, Chandos walked on, taking the narrow lane which led along the side of the hill towards Winslow Abbey, then at the distance of about seven miles. The sun was within half an hour of its setting; but the sweet, long twilight of the late spring evenings was to be depended upon for many minutes after the star of day was down, and Chandos did not wish to reach the cottage of Lockwood before it was dark. He walked therefore calmly and somewhat slowly, now mounting, now descending, amongst the trees and copses of the hill side, as the road

pursued its varying course. Sometimes the view was shut out by trees, and nothing was seen but the green branches and the round silvery trunks of the old beeches, with the rays of the setting sun stealing in amongst them, and tipping the moss and underwood with gold; but more frequently he caught sight of the wide extended plains to the west, lying in definite lines of purple and grey, with the varied scenery of the hill-slope forming the foreground, the trees of the old wood tossed here and there amongst the yellow, broken banks, and every now and then part of the outline of a cottage or small country-house contrasting its straight forms with the wavy lines of the landscape, and bringing in images of social life amongst the wildness of uncultivated nature.

The sun was more than half down; but a bright spot of gold upon the edge of the horizon, with one line of dark cloud drawn across it, still poured forth a flood of splendour, when a little turn of the road brought Chandos nearly in front of a human habitation. It was

a simple little cottage of two stories high, with a row of green paling before it, a little garden in front, and two doors, one in the centre, and the other at the side leading probably to the kitchen. It was built upon the extreme verge of the steep bank, so that there seemed no exit behind; and the road spread out wide before, under a cliffy piece of the hill, which seemed to have been scooped out by man's hands, probably for sand or gravel. It was a sequestered little nook; and, in the green evening light, as it streamed through the trees, looked as peaceful an abode as a weary heart could well desire.

The pleasant tranquillity of the scene had apparently attracted another person, besides the inhabitants of the cottage, to make a temporary sojourn there; for, underneath the high bank just opposite, was a stream of silver-grey smoke rising up against the cliff, and curling in amongst the trees which topped it; and below was seen the dilapidated tin-kettle from which it proceeded, with an old man blowing hard into the hole where once a spout had been.

A number of pots and pans lay around, and a wallet was cast upon the ground hard by. The old man whistled a wild air in time as he blew, and his face was turned rather towards the house than his work, so that Chandos had a full view of his features. It required not two looks to bring to his recollection the travelling tinker, who had conducted him to the gipsy encampment on his first visit to Northferry.

Walking up to him with a smile, the young gentleman asked if he remembered him; and the old man, laughing, winked his eye, answering, in his peculiar cracked voice, "Aye, do I, master gardener. Do you want food, and drink, and information to-day, as you did the last time we met?"

"Food and drink I can dispense with to-day," replied Chandos; "but a little information would not be amiss. Can you tell me, my good friend, where I can find Sally Stanley?"

"I can find her myself," answered the tinker; "that is to say, I could find her if I could quit this; but I mustn't."

"Indeed!" said Chandos, in some surprise: "why not? I suppose you will go before night; for you have not got even a tent here to cover you."

"That's nothing," answered the gipsy; "I shall be here all night, unless some one comes to relieve me, as they call it."

"Why, are you on guard, then?" asked Chandos.

"I'm on watch, and that is as good," replied the tinker, winking his eye, and looking towards the house.

"Who are you watching there, then?" demanded the young gentleman; but the old man only grinned, and made no reply for a minute or two, till Chandos repeated his question.

"Very likely!" said the tinker; "don't you think I'll tell you, master? I'm watching some one who will not come out in a hurry while I am here; and when I'm gone, there will be another, and when he's gone, another, till we starve the rat out of his hole, or at all events find out if he is in it. But

you have nothing to do with that. You are not one of us, you know. You've your own trade, and that's a gardener's. Stick to that."

"I've given that up some time, as I think you know," answered Chandos.

"Aye, may be, may be," said the old tinker; "I've heard something of it. But what is it you want to say to Sally Stanley? Do you want your new fortune told? She is the rarest hand amongst them for that. Never was such a one; for she is always right, one way or another: and our people think she has got a spirit that tells her all that is going to happen, at those times when she gets into her tantarums and goes about amongst the dead men's graves and that. I would not bide her curse for a great deal. It fell hard upon poor Harry Chambers; for you know he was sent over the water for life, just three months after. But what do you want with her?"

"Nay, that is my business," answered Chandos; "only you tell her I am down here again, and will speak to her when she

likes. I have a good many things to say that she may wish to hear; and she has something to say to me."

"But where shall she look for you?" asked the tinker. "Though I dare say she knows well enough; for she knows everything."

"It is better to make sure," replied the young gentleman; "so let her know that I shall be at Lockwood's cottage to-night, and be gone by day-break. I shall then be at my place at Northferry, for a day or two, or between that and S——; and then, perhaps, over at Elmsly."

"I shan't see her to-night," said the tinker; "for she is a good way off: and Garon comes up when I am to go. After that I'll find her out.—But look, look—quietly, quietly! Don't you see a man in there, at the back of the little parlour—a man with a round face and a pair of green spectacles?"

"Yes, I do," said Chandos; "now that they have opened that window at the back to let the light in, I see a man there; but I cannot will see what he is like."

"Use your young eyes well," said the tinker; "and tell me if he has not a round, red face, and a pair of green spectacles on, and a flaxen wig, and a cravat high up about his chin—why I can see the spectacles myself."

"So do I now," said Chandos. But the next moment the front window was shut, and all further view into the interior of the room cut off. Chandos mused. He had more than once, as a native of a well-wooded country greatly frequented by gipsies, remarked the extraordinary knowledge which that curious race of wanderers acquire of all that is passing in their neighbourhood, and had wondered how they arrived at their information. The uses which they put it to when gained was more evident; but he knew not till that night, and indeed few do know the marvellous pains which gipsies often take to find out minute and apparently insignificant facts, and the no less wonderful skill with which they combine them when obtained, and draw deductions from them, generally approaching very close

to the truth. Sometimes they have an object, and sometimes none; for curiosity by habit becomes a passion with them. But in the present instance there was evidently some end in view; and Chandos, from various circumstances, felt inclined to inquire further ere he proceeded.

Following the same train of combinations which a gipsy would most likely have followed, suspicions were excited which he longed to turn into certainties; and after thinking over the matter for a time, he said, "And so, my good friend, the gentlemen with the round, red face and green spectacles is hidden down here, is he?

"I did not say he was hidden," answered the tinker, instantly upon his guard.

"You said what amounts to the same thing," replied Chandos; "for you told me he would not come out as long as you were here."

"Aye; that may be for fear of having his bones broke," said the other; "you know, we don't easily forgive them who offend us."

"Come, come; I am not to be put upon

the wrong scent," replied Chandos. "Sally Stanley told me something of this before; but I did not think she would have found out his hiding-place so soon."

"Why, what does she know of it?" asked the tinker, with the most natural air in the world; "you are out in your guesses, master gardener. You can't come over an old cove like me. If you know anything of the gemman, go and ring the bell, and ask if Mr. Wilson's at home. I dare say he'll see *you*;" and the old man laid a strong emphasis on the last word.

"Is it a Mr. Wilson who lives there, then?" asked Chandos.

The gipsy nodded his head, and Chandos, saying, "It is not a bad plan," walked straight up to the little gate, and rang the bell. The gipsy put his tongue in his cheek, and winked his eye; but the next moment a maidservant came to the door of the house, and, without approaching the garden-gate, inquired, in a flippant tone, "What do you want, young man?"

"Is Mr. Wilson at home?" demanded Chandos, not at all expecting that the girl would admit the residence of such a person there. To his surprise, however, she answered, more civilly than at first, "No, sir; he's gone to town."

"But I saw him in that room, a minute or two ago," replied the young gentleman.

"Lord, sir, no," said the maid; "that is his father, the old gentleman who is ill with a quinsy, and don't see any one. Master has been in London this week. He'll be down o' Thursday."

Convinced that his suspicions had led him wrong, Chandos turned away, and saw the old tinker laughing heartily. It is not pleasant to be laughed at, as the sapient reader is probably aware. But laughers sometimes lose; and in this instance the half-crown which had been destined for the old man remained in Chandos's pocket: not that it was kept there by any feeling of anger on his part; but because the young gentleman was not inclined to face the merriment his disappointment had cre-

ated, he turned away, and walked straight on in the direction of Winslow Abbey.

Night fell when he was at the distance of three miles from the park; and, hurrying his pace, he soon after stood before the gates of tall, hammered iron-work, erected more than two centuries before. The great gates were chained and padlocked; but the lesser one, at the side, was open, and Chandos entered the park where he had played in boyhood, with a bitter feeling at his heart, when he thought that all his efforts might not be able to prevent it passing away from his name and race for ever.

He followed the path which he had trod every Sunday during his mother's life, from the Abbey to the parish church, and back; and at the distance of about half-a-mile from the gates, he caught sight of the mansion. There was a single, solitary light in one of the windows, shining faint, like the last hope in his breast; and as he advanced it flitted along the whole range, till at length, at the further extreme, it blazed brighter, as if

several candles had been suddenly lighted. At the same time, turning to the right, the young gentleman took the path which led away to the house of his half-brother. The park seemed to him even more melancholy than when last he visited it. It had a more deserted feeling to his mind. It was to be sold; and yet for all that he clung to it the more. If it had cost him his right hand, he would have kept it. As we attach ourselves the more fondly to a friend in distress, so he held more firmly by the old place he loved, because those who ought to have loved it likewise, abandoned it.

"Would that my father had left it to me!" he repeated to himself more than once. "Had it been nought but the Abbey and the Park, I would have worked the flesh from my bones to keep it up. But it is gone—gone! and the hope is vain they hold out to me. I feel it, I know it!"

With such melancholy thoughts he walked on, through the chesnut-wood, all in green

leaf, across the ferny savannah, where the deer lay thick, amongst the old hawthorn trees, loading the air with aromatic balm He approached the park wall, and saw, by the clear grey light sent before the yet invisible moon, the enclosure round the house of Lockwood, and the house itself—a dark, black mass, upon the silvery eastern sky. Yet the trees and shrubs in the garden before the windows caught another ray, and in long beamy lines the misty light poured forth from the lozenge panes of the casements. Chandos opened the little garden gate and went in; but as he approached the door, he heard voices speaking, and even laughter, very dissonant to his ear. He was in no mood for merry company: there were few people he could wish to meet, and many he would not meet; and ere he gave any indication of his presence, he walked along the path before the windows and looked in, to ascertain who were the guests within. Before him, with his back to the casement, the neat

white dimity curtain of which was not drawn, appeared the tall, powerful frame of Lockwood himself, while a bowl of smoking punch stood upon the table before him, and his hand was stretched out, armed with a curious, old-fashioned ladle, which he was dipping in the fragrant compound, to supply the glass which another person opposite was holding out towards him. In the face of that other person, which was turned towards the window, Chandos instantly recognized the handsome but too delicate features of Faber. Lockwood filled the glass to the brim, and then raised his own, already full, exclaiming so loud that the words were heard without, "Here's to him, then. Health to our good brother Chandos: may God grant him his rights, and send confusion to those who would wrong him!"

Chandos waited to hear no more, but approaching the door of the house, was about to ring the bell. A peal of laughter, not from Lockwood's lips, though with a far more

joyous sound than he had ever before heard those of Faber utter, made the visitor pause for a moment; and then with a sudden and somewhat impatient movement, he lifted the latch, and entered unannounced.

CHAPTER IX.

As Chandos extended one hand to Faber and the other to Lockwood, he remarked that the cheek of the former was a good deal flushed, and his eye more bright and sparkling than usual. The bowl of strong punch on the table was nearly empty, and the deduction was evident. Lockwood's strong head and strong frame had resisted the effects of his potations; but Faber, though not at all drunk, was a good deal excited.

"Welcome, welcome back!" said Lockwood. "I was just going to write you a letter, ending after Mrs. Penelope's fashion—'Nil mihi rescribas attamen ipse veni.' You

have come at the very nick of time, Chandos; for here Mr. Faber has been telling me things which prove that your father was not so unkindly negligent of you as you have supposed."

"For that, I am thankful," answered Chandos, "even if no other result take place. What is it, Faber? Let me hear."

Lockwood's eyes were fixed upon the countenance of the young man to whom Mr. Winslow spoke; and he saw the timid, hesitating look, which was its habitual expression, steal over it again. "Come, Faber, you and Chandos finish the punch between you," he said; "I have had enough."

"And so have I too," answered Faber. But he suffered Lockwood to fill his glass again, and drank it off at once. The effect was quick. He reflected, perhaps, that what he had just said he could not unsay; and at all events, the punch gave him courage to repeat it. The manner was diffuse and circumlocutory, it is true; and where there was an opportunity of putting anything in

a doubtful manner, by a change in the mood of the verb, from the direct indicative to the potential, he never failed to do so; but the substance of the story was as follows. — "He had seen, read, and copied," he said, "the will, to which the memorandum found by Mr. Roberts referred. The late Sir Harry Winslow, who had ordered him to copy it, had kept the transcript; but he recollected the whole particulars. To himself, an annuity of four hundred a year had been left, chargeable upon the Winslow Abbey estate. The whole of that property, with the Abbey and all that it contained, had been left to Chandos. The Elmsly property had been assigned to his brother, as well as the whole personal property, with the exception of four thousand pounds to Lockwood, in lieu of all other claims, and a few legacies to servants."

There the young man paused; and Lockwood, after having given him a little time to proceed, if he pleased, exclaimed, "Go on,

Mr. Faber; you have not half done! Remember about the burning of the will."

"I did not say he burned the will," cried Faber, turning white; "I only said he burned a good many papers just after Sir Harry's death. I saw him, as I was looking out of my window at Elmsly, which is just in the corner, near the strong-room. What they were, I do not know."

"Then he burned papers in the strong-room?" said Chandos.

"Yes, Mr. Winslow," replied Faber, "that he certainly did. Three or four, I saw him burn, with a great iron chest open before him; he held them to the candle one after the other, and then threw them down on the stone floor, and watched them till they went out. But, mind, I do not know what they were. I never said that any one of them was the will."

"Of course, you could not do so, Faber," replied Chandos; "for I know the position of the two rooms well; and you could not at that distance see what the papers were."

"No, I could not see," reiterated Faber.

"Nevertheless," said Chandos, gravely, "what you did see, and what you do know, is so important, that I must request to have it in writing."

"Oh no, indeed, I cannot, Mr. Winslow," said the young man, very pale. "Why, if Sir William Winslow were to know, what would happen? You will not ask me, I am sure."

"Be quite sure, Faber, not only that I will ask; but that I will insist," answered Chandos, with a frown. "Let me have pen and ink, Lockwood, and we will have this down at once. My good friend, you have no choice. You have made a statement this night which you will soon have to repeat in a court of justice. Now your fault, Faber, is timidity: that timidity might lead you to gloss over or attempt to conceal facts in court, which would be speedily wrung from you by cross-examination, and you would be put to shame. But by insisting upon your signing the account you have given, I guard you against yourself; for you will have no

motive for hesitation or concealment. You must there state what you have here stated, without a consideration of the consequences."

"I cannot, indeed I cannot," exclaimed Faber, trembling violently.

"Faber, I insist," replied Chandos; "I did not think that you, whom I have so often befriended, so often protected, would refuse to do a simple act of justice in my favour, out of regard for a man comparatively a stranger to you. Write down his words, Lockwood, as well as you can recollect them. They shall then be read over to him, that he may sign them."

"Oh, Mr. Winslow, I did not think you would do this," cried Faber; "you know what a terrible man Sir William is."

"Write, Lockwood, write," cried Chandos, his lip slightly curling with contempt. But Faber started up from the table, saying in a more resolute tone than he had hitherto used, "It is of no use, I will not sign it, I will go."

Chandos, however, threw himself between

him and the door, locked it, and took out the key. "Your pardon, Mr. Faber," he said; "you do not go. You stay here, and sign the statement you have just made, or if you go, you go in custody."

"In custody?" exclaimed the young man, his eyes staring wildly with fear.

"Yes, sir," answered Chandos; "in custody, on a charge of being accessory to the destruction of my father's will, which, allow me to tell you, is a felony. Sir William Winslow may be a very violent man, but you will find that his brother is a very resolute one."

"Oh, Mr. Winslow, I am sure you would not do such a thing," cried Faber.

"You will see in two minutes," replied Chandos sternly. "When Lockwood has finished the paper, you shall have your choice. You either sign it, or he fetches a constable. In the mean while, sit down; for I am in no humour to be trifled with."

The young man cast himself on his chair, covering his eyes with his hand. Lockwood wrote rapidly; and in about ten minutes the

short statement he drew up was finished. He then read it aloud, pausing upon each sentence; and Chandos, satisfied that it was substantially the same as the account which Faber had himself given, placed it before him, saying, "There is pen and ink."

The young man hesitated for more than a minute; and then Chandos withdrew the paper from before him, and turned to Lockwood, saying coldly, "Fetch the constable, Lockwood; I will guard him till you return."

"Stop, stop," cried Faber; "I will sign it. Only give me a little time. You should have put in, that I was *accidentally* looking out of my window that night."

"Put it in yourself above," answered Lockwood, handing him the pen.

Faber took it, and made the alteration he proposed; then paused and hesitated again, but in the end wrote his name rapidly at the bottom.

"And now, Faber," said Chandos, laying his hand kindly on his shoulder, you will yourself have more peace of mind. Depend upon

it, the only way to preserve a man's dignity of character, his peace, and self-respect, is to do what he knows is right, perfectly careless of consequences. You were aware that I had been wronged. You had the means of assisting me to regain my right, and that, by only making a declaration which you were bound in honour and justice to make. You should, indeed, have made it before; but I forgive your not having done so, because I know you are afraid of a man whose violence gives him anything but a claim to respect."

"Why I should gain more than lose," said the weak young man, bursting into tears; "if you could prove this other will, I should have two hundred a year more than by the other; so you must see it was not my own interest I was consulting, Mr. Winslow."

"No, you were consulting nothing but your fears, Faber," said Chandos; "and those fears of Sir William Winslow, depend upon it, are quite vain and foolish. He has no power over you; he can do nought to injure you."

"How I shall ever meet him again, when

he comes back, I know not," answered Faber, with a melancholy shake of the head.

"He is back already," replied Chandos; "at least, I am told so."

The young man started off his chair at this announcement, actually as if some one had fired a pistol at him; but while he was gazing in Mr. Winslow's face with a look of terror almost ludicrous, some one shook the door of Lockwood's house, and Faber darted away into the inner room, as if he thought that it could be none other than the man he so much dreaded.

"Who is there?" asked Lockwood.

"It is I, sir," answered the voice of Garbett, the keeper; and, at a sign from Chandos, Lockwood opened the door, saying, "What is it, Garbett?"

The man started at beholding Chandos Winslow, and exclaimed, "Bless me, sir, is that you? Well, sir, I am glad to see you, now I know who you are. Why I taught you to shoot when you were a young lad at Eton."

"I am very glad to see you," answered

Chandos; "but you wanted to tell Lockwood something."

"Why, sir, it is a night of surprises," said Garbett: "your brother, Sir William, arrived at the Abbey about an hour ago. We have been looking for Mr. Faber everywhere, and can't find him; and so he sent me down to tell Mr. Lockwood that he wants to see him."

"If he wants me, he must come down to seek me," said Lockwood, bluntly. "I want nothing with him; and therefore shall not go near him. Just tell him what I say, Garbett. He knows me well enough, and won't expect any civil messages."

While Lockwood had been giving this answer, Chandos Winslow had remained with his arms crossed upon his chest, his teeth set fast, and his lips compressed. There was a great struggle going on in his breast. The feelings of indignation which had been raised against his brother were very strong. He did not comprehend that it was vindictive pride, rather than avarice, which had made Sir William Winslow destroy his father's will

—the desire of triumphing over, and trampling upon, a brother who had offended him, rather than the love of mere money; he called the transaction pitiful, as well as base; and when Garbett entered, Chandos was resolved, without pause, to expose the whole in a court of justice, at all risks. But, as the man spoke, gentler emotions arose—feelings strong, though tender. He remembered early days. He hesitated, though he did not yield. He asked himself, "Is there not a middle course?" and before the keeper could reply to Lockwood, he said aloud, "I will go up to him myself;" and he moved towards the door.

"Think twice, think twice," said Lockwood, laying his hand upon his arm.

"No; I am resolved," said Chandos, in a sad, but determined tone. "We will meet once more as brothers, before we meet as adversaries. I will forget for the time that there is ought within his bosom but kindred blood, and a brother's spirit. I will entreat, I will persuade, I will argue, as a last re-

source before I am driven to menace and to act. I will try what reason will do, in order to escape a course, the results of which I dread to think of."

"Well," said Lockwood; "well, it is the right way; but he does not deserve it, and no good will come of it."

Chandos made no reply, but walked out into the Park, and took his way, with a quick step, towards the Abbey.

"We had better go after him at once, Garbett," said Lockwood; "there is no knowing what may follow. They are both sharp spirits; and I should not wonder if there were blood shed."

"Lord, Mr. Lockwood, I hope not," cried the keeper; "but let us be after him, then; for it is as well to be near to part them in case of need."

It might be difficult to part them," answered Lockwood; "but come along;" and taking up his hat, he accompanied the keeper into the park, leaving Faber, still trembling with apprehension, in the inner room of the cottage.

CHAPTER X.

In the large drawing-room at Winslow Abbey, with four tallow candles on the table, to give some light to its great extent, stood Sir William Winslow, his brow heavy with thought, his cheek pale, and his eye haggard with anxiety. The gloomy room, the faded hangings of dull crimson velvet, which seemed to drink in all the rays of light and give none back again, the many memories with which the place was stored, the solitary aspect of the nearly deserted mansion, the melancholy sighing of the wind through its courts and corridors, tended not to raise the spirit in a heart already depressed by crime. He had sent his valet to Elmsly, glad to be freed from

his oppressive presence, and had come on alone, full of bitter and even angry fancies. The worm that never dies was in his heart, the fire that cannot be quenched consumed his brain. He had given way to an intemperate burst of passion at not finding Faber there waiting to receiving him, though the young man knew not of his coming; but when he had sent Garbett out to find Lockwood, and he remained alone in that wide room, his feelings became more gloomy and less fierce, his heart sunk, to think of what he was, and of what he might yet become.

The memories of pleasant childhood, too, of innocence, if not of peace, (for he had been turbulent from his infancy,) came back in mournful contrast with the present, when peace and innocence were gone together, when nought remained but bitter anxiety, and corroding fear, and dark remorse. It was well nigh despair he felt.

Yet there was something like a gleam of sunshine upon the long, long past which made him fix his eyes by preference upon it.

He thought of the young days when he had sported in that room, piled up the chairs into castles, or built himself houses with the sofa cushions. He saw his father's stately form stand gazing at him with pride; he beheld his mother sit and watch him with affection; he knew that both had looked forward with expectation of high things to his future career; he asked himself where were these hopes? how were they fulfilled? Gone, gone, with those days of childhood, with those innocent sports, with the calm of infancy, with the fleeting ills of boyhood. Gone for ever—a bar between them and fruition, which no repentance could ever remove, no reformation ever do away.

He took a candle from the table, and held it up to the large picture of his mother, gazing earnestly upon features which had almost faded from memory. Suddenly his eye fell upon a ticket in the corner, marked, "Lot 60;" and he exclaimed, "Good God! was I going to sell that? No, that must not be sold!" And taking the ticket, he tore it from the frame.

The next instant there was a timid knock at the door, and he said, in a milder voice than usual, "Come in."

It was the keeper Garbett's wife, with something like a letter in her hand; which, advancing with many curtsies, she presented to Sir William.

"Who was it gave you this?" asked the Baronet, taking a curiously folded piece of vellum from her hand.

"A strange-looking man, sir," she said, "gave it in at the door: more like a corpse than a living man."

"You may go," said Sir William Winslow, without opening the letter, which he conceived to be some law paper, connected perhaps with the relations regarding property between his brother and himself; and when she was gone he paused a moment, in thought. Whatever were his meditations, they ended by his exclaiming, "No! Curse me if he shall! It is unfair and unjust. I am the eldest son; and he had no right to

have it. I will fight it out to the last penny I have "

As he spoke, he tore open the letter hastily. What was his surprise to find that the few lines it contained were written in blood-red ink, and in a fine, clear, steady female hand. He held it to the candle and read the following words:—

"William Winslow, alive or dead, meet me on Thursday at your father's grave in the church-yard of Elmsly, at midnight. Fail not, or I will come to fetch you."

"SUSAN GREY."

He let the parchment fall from his hand, and gazed at it as it lay upon the floor with a wild and straining eye. No one had scoffed more loudly at all superstitions—no one in his life and conduct had shown a more practical contempt for the very idea of supernatural visitations. But his nerves were shaken by remorse and apprehension. Terror and anxiety had enlisted fancy on their side. He knew the handwriting well; he believed that no one was aware of his return to England;

he thought that the hand which must have traced those lines had long been consigned to the grave. Hardihood, and firmness, and the powers of reason, gave way together; and the fierce, firm, proud Sir William Winslow, trembled in every limb. He called it a fraud —an absurd, a ludicrous invention, an idle deceit, a scheme only fit to frighten a child. But yet he gazed upon the parchment, yet his limbs shook; notwithstanding every effort, yet his heart sunk; and he thought of the injured and the dead; he thought of his violated promises, his unfeeling abandonment, his brutal repulse of the prayer for mercy and support; and he felt, ay, he felt in the heart of the spirit, that if ever the dead are permitted to revisit earth and warn those who have wronged them of approaching retribution, his was a case in which such an awful interruption of the ordinary laws that govern all things might well take place: in short, that he had called upon himself a special curse, and might well expect a special punishment.

Ere he could nerve himself to throw off the first dark impression, the door opened suddenly; and with a fearful start Sir William Winslow sank into a chair. The next instant his brother stood before him.

"What brings you here?" cried the baronet, recovering himself the next moment; "what brings you to this house? I thought, sir, we had parted not to meet again."

"You were mistaken, Sir William," answered Chandos, shutting the door behind him. "Events have taken place since we parted which renders our meeting again necessary. When I left you, I told you I would never enter your house again; but in coming hither I only come to my own."

"Your own!" exclaimed Sir William; "what do you mean? Have you gone mad?"

"Far from it, my brother," answered Chandos, taking a chair and seating himself before him; "let us not begin, William, with violence and altercation. What may result from our conversation, God knows; but let it, at all events, commence with calmness. That I

bear you no ill will, you ought to feel; for when your life was in my power I spared it: nay, I spare it still."

"It is false," cried Sir William Winslow; "you have no power over my life; you never have had. It was your own was in danger."

Chandos commanded himself: "You are very foolish to believe," he said, "that deeds such as you have done, can ever be done in perfect secrecy. Two words spoken by me at *my* trial for *your* crime, would have brought forward such a mass of evidence against you, that by no subtlety could you have escaped. I saw you strike the blow—ay, and repeat it, as the old man fell; but my testimony would have been of little avail, perhaps, unless corroborated. But corroboration was not wanting. There were other eyes that saw you go down with him; there were other ears that heard your angry words; there were those too who saw you return; there were persons who watched your agitation, and your wild whirling conversation, and drew the right deduction. But, more than all, in your case there was a

motive for the deed, which explained all, and rendered it more horrible. Shall I tell you what that motive was?"

Sir William Winslow sat silent, with his eyes bent down upon the floor; and after a pause, Chandos went on. "You learned that night, that your victim had discovered you had burnt your father's will to wrong your brother; he taxed you with it; and you killed him!—Be silent!—Do not deny it; but listen to me. I have the proofs, strong and speaking proofs, of the crime with which he charged you, as well as of the other. I know every item of the will, each legacy that it contained; and I know, moreover, what is of greater importance still—the very moment, and the very place at which you destroyed it. Shall I tell you where and when? In the strong room at Elmsly, on the night after my father's death. Alone, and with the door closed, you thought no eyes saw you; but you were mistaken. Everything that you did was observed by one competent to bear witness of the facts, and I

now ask you, William Winslow, whether you will drive me to bring forward that witness in a court of justice? For, of one thing be perfectly assured, that Winslow Abbey shall not be sold; and that you shall do me justice, either voluntarily, or by compulsion."

He spoke slowly; and during the time that he did speak his brother's hardy and resolute spirit had leisure to recover itself, and prepare for resistance.

"You are violent, I see, as ever. But let me inform you that you are mistaken—mistaken, first, as to your facts, and secondly as to the person you have to deal with. Do you not know, sir," he continued, changing his whole manner, and assuming the stern and overbearing tone more natural to him; "do you not know that I am not a man to be bullied or insulted with impunity?"

"I neither bully nor insult you, Sir William Winslow," replied his brother; "I tell you plain and undeniable facts. I do so in order that you may spare yourself and me the pain of forcing me, much against my will, to

compel the concession of my just demands."

"And pray what are your sweet demands?" asked Sir William Winslow, with his lip curling.

"The execution of my father's last will," answered Chandos. "If your memory fail you as to the particulars, I can refresh it from a paper in my pocket."

A momentary shade of hesitation appeared upon the face of Sir William Winslow; but it passed away again immediately, and he answered boldly, "The only will, sir, that your father left has been proved, and is in course of execution. In that I find no right or title given to you to interfere with the disposal of Winslow Abbey; and I rather imagine you will think twice, before you afford the world the disgraceful spectacle of a younger brother attempting to dispossess the elder of his patrimonial property."

"You did not go to Elmsly, I perceive, Sir William," said Chandos, "or you would have discovered, before now, that such calculations upon my forbearance are erroneous.

When you do go there, you will find a notice in due form, not to proceed with the pretended sale of that which is not yours; and probably a letter from Lord Overton, to tell you that he has received my protest against the whole transaction between you and him, regarding Winslow Abbey."

"You have not done it," cried Sir William, starting up.

"You are mistaken; I have!" replied Chandos, firmly; "I have taken the first step in a course which I will tread unremittingly to the end—if I am driven to do so. But I beg of you, I beseech you, to think of the consequences, and to spare me the pain. Remember, I entreat, what must be proved in the course of such a suit. I shall have to prove," he continued, "that poor Roberts discovered in the drawer of the library here, a memorandum in my father's own handwriting, of having given a signed copy of the will to you. I shall have to prove, by the same witnesses, who were present when that memorandum was found, that he came over

in haste to Northferry, to bear me the important information; and that he was murdered before he reached me. I shall have to prove that he believed that you had burned the will: perhaps I shall have toprove, also, that he told you so as you stood together by the fish-pond at Northferry, the moment before his death."

His voice sunk almost to a whisper as he spoke; and a livid paleness spread over Sir William Winslow's face.

Chandos thought he had produced some effect, and he went on more eagerly. "Oh, William!" he said, "consider, and do what is right; for the sake of our father's and our mother's memory; for the sake of the honour of our name and race—for your own sake, if not for mine, do me justice. Remember, O remember, that even to save my own life I would not peril yours; that I abandoned and would not use the plain, straightforward defence which would have freed me from danger and anxiety in a moment; that I would not be a witness against a brother; that I would not bring an accusation against you,

even to cast the burden from myself—an accusation which, once made, would have been supported by a thousand other facts—by the testimony of her who heard you speaking with poor Roberts, by the testimony of those who saw you walking with him, by the evidence of the man who witnessed your return to the house, by that of your own servants, who must have seen things which could leave no doubt."

Sir William sank into his chair again, and grasped the arm tight, but made no answer.

"Remember that I forbore," continued Chandos; "and do me simple justice. But hear why I forbore:—I believed that you struck the fatal blow under the influence of blind and headlong passion; but I knew that a jury would not take that into account, when they found the crime committed tended to cover another crime. I think so still: I do believe, I do trust that with time for thought, that with any pause for consideration, you would not deliberately have brought that old

man's grey hair to the dust, even to hide the wrong that you did me."

"I did you no wrong," muttered Sir William Winslow; "this is my patrimonial inheritance. You have no right to it."

"You know at this moment," answered Chandos; "that my father left it to me, because he was well aware that you do not value it as I do."

Sir William Winslow set his teeth hard, and said from between them, in a low, bitter voice, "You shall never possess it?"

"Is that your last word upon the subject," asked Chandos.

Sir William Winslow nodded his head, and answered, slowly and deliberately, "The very last."

"Then there is no resource," said the young gentleman, in a tone more of sadness than irritation; and turning to the door he left the room.

A few steps down the corridor, he found Lockwood and the keeper standing together, silent; but he was too much agitated by all

that had taken place to think of the motives which brought them there.

"Come, Lockwood," he said, in a low voice; "it is all in vain. He will yield to no inducements. Where is Faber?"

"Down at my house still," answered Lockwood; "he is not likely to come out, for he is as timid as a hare."

"He had better not see my brother any more till after the trial," answered Chandos. "I must go down and speak with him;" and walking hastily away with Lockwood, he left the Abbey and crossed the park.

When they entered the little front room in Lockwood's house, they found everything exactly as they had left it, except, indeed, that the unsnuffed candles had guttered down nearly into the sockets. When they came to try the inner door, however, in search of Faber, they found it locked; and it was only when the young man heard the voices of Chandos and his half-brother calling to him, that he ventured to speak or come forth. Even then he was in a terrible state of agitation;

and his first words were, "Oh, Mr. Winslow, I cannot, I dare not go up to the Abbey, or see your brother."

"I do not think it necessary or right that you should," replied Chandos. "You had better come with me to the little village inn, and go over with me to S—— to-morrow. You can thence write to Sir William, informing him that you have made up your mind to tell the whole truth regarding the will."

"I won't date the letter," said Faber; "and if you stay long at S——, depend upon it he will come over, and find us out."

Sad as he was, Chandos could not refrain a smile; but he replied, "Do not be alarmed, I will take care no harm happens to you. Moreover, I shall only remain in S—— a few hours with my solicitor. I shall then either go to Elmsly, to the house of poor Mr. Roberts, as I understand his cousin, who is his executor, has taken up his abode there for the time, or shall return to Northferry, as I find advisable. But if I go to Elmsly, I will not ask you to go with me. Now, Lockwood,

I think I will set out for the inn; but you had better either come over with us now, or join us early to-morrow morning; for there is much I wish to say to you, and your presence, too, may be needed at S——-."

"I will come now," said Lockwood; "there is no use of losing time. *Carpe diem*, master Chandos. Only let me leave my place safe; for these candles have been dropping perpendiculars too long."

Thus saying, he bolted the windows in both the rooms, shut and locked the front door, extinguished the lights, and then led his two guests out by the back door into the lane which ran under the park wall.

The walk through the narrow and tortuous roads passed nearly in silence; for Chandos was sad, as well as thoughtful; and Lockwood, though somewhat curious to know what had taken place between the brothers, did not like to inquire, especially in the presence of Faber. Nor was it a subject on which Chandos could venture to speak. He saw and knew that Lockwood entertained suspicions

in regard to his brother's share in the death of poor Roberts, which were but too just; but he could not tell him the words which had passed between himself and Sir William Winslow, without confirming those suspicions—without converting them into certainties. He did not choose to do so. He had resolved indeed to let events take their course; to claim his own boldly; and if discovery and destruction fell on him who opposed his right, to let it fall; but not by any spontaneous act of his to move the tottering rock which hung impending over a brother's head.

They arrived at the inn; they sat down in a small, neat, cheerful room; but still they remained silent, till at length Faber rose, saying he was tired, and would go to bed. As soon as he had retired, Chandos saw questions hanging upon Lockwood's lips; but he stopped them at once in his usual bold and decided way.

"Ask nothing, Lockwood," he said, before the other spoke. "My brother is resolute:

so am I. What passed between us must rest between us. My plan at present is to go over to S——; and after seeing my solicitor there, to proceed with him perhaps to Elmsly, where I hope to find some confirmation of the facts of my case. Indeed there may be, not unlikely, a draft of the will. You must make a formal statement of all you know regarding the memorandum; we must induce Faber to do the same; and when we have collected all the information which is to be procured, I will lay it before counsel, and proceed as they advise. Let us now to bed; for I would fain set out to-morrow as soon after dawn as possible; for this is a business in which no time must be lost."

CHAPTER XI.

"Hist! hist!" cried a small voice, as Chandos Winslow was walking along in the cool of the early morning, with Lockwood on one side and Faber on the other, towards the nearest place to Winslow Abbey where post-horses were to be obtained. They were in the wood, clothing the side of the hill through which he had passed on the preceding evening; and though the path was wide, and the trees far apart, with no underwood, he looked about in vain for the body whence the sounds proceeded. Still, however, the voice cried, "Hist! hist!" and in a minute after, a boy slid down the boll of one of the large trees, and, running forward, sprang affectionately into Chandos's arms.

"Why, Tim, my little man, you here?" cried the young gentleman. "How came you to be playing truant so far from Northferry?"

"I am not playing truant," replied the boy. "My mother took me; because she said that it should be me who served you, and good old General Tracy. She wants to see you very much; but would not go away. You will find her on there; but I must go up the tree again to look out."

"Is she before the cottage, a quarter of a mile on?" asked Clandos.

"No, no!" said the boy. "Go forward till you see a straw on the branches, on the left; then you will come to two others, and then to three. Whistle where the three straws are, and she'll come. Good bye, good bye!" and running away again, he climbed up the tree like a squirrel.

"He's a nice lad," said Lockwood: "'tis a pity!"—but he left *the what* unexplained, and the party walked on, looking carefully on the left for the signs which the boy had mentioned. The first straw, however, must

have escaped their notice; for they came to the two, without having perceived it; and the three were found not far on. But Chandos had no occasion to give the signal; for he had hardly seen the place, when Sally Stanley was before him. She looked worn and ill; but her large, dark eyes had lost none of their wild lustre; and she exclaimed as soon as she beheld him, "Ah! you have come: I knew you would come. Fate would have it so. And you too, Lockwood: you are a hard man; but you do not mean ill. But, who is this white-faced thing? and what is he fit for?"

She looked full at Faber as she spoke; but Lockwood took upon him to reply, saying, "Ay, my good girl, I'm not so hard, perhaps, as you think: you made me savage with your strange ways. After all, you were right in the main; and if you had not stopped me, I should have spoilt all: but you should have told me what you were about; for how could I tell? However, I am sorry for what I said. I did not mean to act so harshly, and

was sorry for it before I had gone half a mile." "Enough, enough," answered the woman: "we all do things we are sorry for;—I have done many. But you should have stayed to listen, and I would have told you all."

"You had plenty of time to tell me before that," answered Lockwood, who did not like any one to have the last word with him. "But we were both a bit wrong; you for keeping me, when you had no right, without any explanation; and I for hitting you upon a sore place, without sufficient cause: so let us forget and forgive."

"So be it!" answered Sally Stanley. "You have no trust or faith; but that is your nature."

"How the devil should I have trust or faith in a set of gipsey ragamuffins, who take me by the throat, and make a prisoner of me, without why or wherefore?" exclaimed Lockwood. "I am a plain man, and will listen to reason, when it is given me; but I don't like force; and will resist it to my dying day, my lass: so don't meddle with me any more; or if you do, tell me why."

"Do not let us lose time in recurring to the past," said Chandos. "Your son tells me, Sally, that you wish to speak with me; and to say truth, I wish much to speak with you: but it must be alone. Tell me now, what you are about here, if it be not a secret; for, to say truth, I have some suspicions that I—or rather those I love are interested therein."

"I am about that, in which you must help," said the woman. "I was sure you would come; and yet, like a fool, I doubted, and had up our own people to do the work if you did not arrive. But they are rude hands; and though we have our own rules, they may be rough with the man. They will not peach—they will not give him up; but they might break his bones, or worse. You two shall do it; but you must promise to observe our laws, and not betray him."

"I really do not clearly comprehend you," said Chandos. "Before I make any promise, I must know fully what it implies."

"Stay, stay: I will go and talk to the men," said Sally Stanley; and without wait-

ing for reply, she darted in amongst the trees. She was absent about ten minutes; and from time to time, Chandos could hear the murmur of speaking voices. Neither he nor his companions uttered a word; for they had thoughts in plenty; but they did not listen; and Lockwood whistled a tune in an under tone, as if to pass the time. He did not know that he was whistling. At length, Sally Stanley returned, and standing in the midst of the three, she said, "First and foremost, you must all promise me that this man shall go free, if he does what is right, and restores what he has taken wrongfully."

"You speak ever in riddles," replied Chandos. "I know not of whom you speak."

"Never mind," answered the woman: "it is a rule with us, not to betray any one to that which you call justice—which no one should know better than yourself, is always injustice. You must promise, that whoever and whatever he is, you will not give him up to the vile instruments of your bad laws.

You may use the threat to frighten him; but you must do no more. I have a certain power over those who are round me; for I know more than they do; I see further than they do, far as they can see. But that power has a boundary, and they will resist. If you do not promise, and keep your promise, you will repent it."

"I always keep my promise, when it is given," answered Chandos; "but I tell you fairly, that if this man be, as I suspect, the person who has so basely defrauded Mr. Tracy, he shall not escape out of England without restoring the property he has attempted to carry off."

"Then, do your worst," said Sally Stanley, with a laugh; "Go and take him, if you can! I tell you, Chandos Winslow, that it will require more skill and power than you possess even to speak with him. One more such word as you have spoken, and I hold my tongue for ever on the means of catching him. Do not think that you can deal with me in such sort. For your sake, and for the

sake of the old man who has befriended my poor boy, I have watched and laboured; but I will not be made a reproach among the people that are now my people. You must promise, or I give you no assistance. If I give you no assistance, all your strength and foolish wisdom are vain. In ten hours from this moment he will be beyond your reach. The wind is in his ship's sail; the sea coast is but eight hours distant; and you may fret yourself in vain, if you lose the present moment for the great object you have before you."

"Promise, promise!" said Lockwood. "It is better to have the deer less the umbles, than by refusing the keeper's fee to lose the buck."

"I am quite willing to promise," answered Chandos, "that if he restores Mr. Tracy's property, I will make no attempt to stay him. I am not a thieftaker; and though I believe it would be but right to give him up to justice, and to inquire into many of his acts more strictly; yet, as I owe all knowledge of his

abode to you, my good woman, I am ready so far to abide by your conditions. But still, I say, if he do not give up Mr. Tracy's property, I will not let him go."

"You must bargain with him for that," replied the woman; "he has got an advantage over a man, who, like all others, has been seeking advantages over his fellows. There are some advantages within your law; some beyond it: but, your laws are nothing to us; and he has only done what many of our own people would do, but in another way. When cheat robs cheat, it is all fair. This Tracy wanted to gain great wealth; some one must lose—nay, many must lose—to swell his fortune. Then comes a bolder rogue, and says, 'What you intended to gain, I will pocket.' Who can blame the man for being as greedy as his employer? But all this is foolish babble. If you will promise, you shall have him in your power in ten minutes; if not, you may follow your own course."

"Well, I promise," said Chandos, after some consideration, "only to use the oppor-

tunity you give me to make a bargain with him for the restoration of the shares. Will that satisfy you?"

"Yes," replied the woman; "but there are more things to be thought of. Come hither apart with me." And leading Chandos a few steps into the wood, she remained for several minutes in eager conversation with him.

"That is but fair," he said, as they came back; "I will do all that; but the people must wait for a few days."

"That they will do readily, on your word," replied Sally Stanley; "now I will send them away. You three stay here a moment; and mind, do everything very silently."

In about five minutes she returned alone, and made a sign to Chandos to follow, which he did, with Lockwood and Faber, through a narrow path amongst the trees, only wide enough to admit the passage of one person at a time. It wound in and out considerably; but the direct distance from the spot where they held their conference, to the top of the bank, under which Chandos had found

the old tinker on the preceding night, could not be more than a hundred yards. I have before mentioned that the top of the bank was thickly covered with trees and underwood; but when the party reached the top, Chandos could perceive that the path they were then following took a turn through the bushes, and then descended in a side-long manner to the road below. The cottage, with all the windows still shut, was clearly to be seen through the branches; and pointing to it with her hand, Sally Stanley whispered, "You will have to wait a while. Keep quite still and silent till you see the door opened; then down like lightning, and in."

"She will shut the door as soon as she sees us," answered Chandos, in the same tone.

"I will provide for that," replied the woman; and after cautioning Lockwood and Faber to be still, she left them on their watch.

For nearly half-an-hour they remained without seeing any movement of human life

upon the road or in the cottage; and Faber asked Chandos, in a nervous whisper, if what they were about was legal. The only reply was an injunction to silence; and the moment after the two upper windows of the cottage were opened, and then the two lower ones. The maid next put her head out, and looked round on every side, then drew it in again, and pulled down the sash. Two or three minutes after a boy was seen coming along the road, dressed in a blue smock-frock and leathern leggings, with a white jug full of milk in his hand. For some moments, so complete was the disguise, that Chandos himself did not recognise Tim Stanley; but the boy at length gave a glance up towards the top of the bank, and then approached the little gate of the cottage garden. He tried it with his hand, apparently to see if it was open, then put his shoulder to it and pushed it in. The instant he had done so the door of the house was thrown violently open, and the woman, rushing out, began to abuse him for breaking the gate, at

the same time snatching the jug of milk out of his hand. Chandos sprang forward and darted down the bank, followed by Lockwood. Their sudden apparition instantly changed the tactics of the woman, who ran towards the house and endeavoured to shut the door; but little Tim was before her, and setting his back stoutly against it, he resisted all her efforts. Another force, however, seemed to be suddenly applied from within; for the door was pushed forward, catching the boy between it and the wall; and as he resolutely maintained his place, he was in danger of being seriously injured, when Chandos came up, and by his superior strength drove it open.

"Run, run!" cried the woman servant; and as the young gentleman forced his way into the passage, a man's figure disappeared at the other end. Pushing the woman aside, he pursued without pause, and found a door leading out at once to the top of the high and precipitous bank, at the edge of which the house was situated; and a rapid glance

down showed him a stout figure running along a narrow, ledge-like path on the face of the cliff. Chandos took a few hurried steps down, fearing that amongst the trees at the bottom he might still lose the object of his pursuit; but no sooner did the fugitive reach the comparatively level ground below, than a tall man, starting out from the bushes, caught him by the collar, and threw him rudely back upon the ground.

"Here he is. Come and take him," cried the man, beckoning to Chandos; and in another minute the young gentleman had his hand upon the shoulder of Mr. Scriptolemus Bond. Lockwood was also by his side; and between them, they raised the worthy gentleman from the ground, and made him walk up the bank again. There is, certainly, something very ludicrous in fear; and the expression of the rogue's countenance, as he silently rolled his sharp black eyes from the face of Chandos to that of Lockwood, had well nigh made the young gentleman laugh, notwithstanding all the grave thoughts that were in his bosom.

"Walk in there, sir," said Chandos, when they reached the door of the little parlour; and then, turning to the maid who stood crying beside Faber and little Tim, in the passage, he added, "If you have hurt the boy by your brutality, my good woman, you shall not go without punishment."

"Oh I am not hurt!" cried Tim; "she's not so bad as a bull."

"Now," said Chandos, entering the parlour, of which Lockwood already had possession, "I think I have at length the pleasure of seeing Mr. Scriptolemus Bond, alias Wilson, &c.; and I have to inform him that he must immediately produce all the scrip, bonds, and papers of all kinds belonging to Mr. Arthur Tracy."

"Who are you, sir?" exclaimed Mr. Scriptolemus Bond, recovering himself a little. "What authority have you to force your way into my house? Where is your warrant or your staff? Do you suppose that without authority I —."

"You ask for authority, do you, sir," said

Chandos. "By so doing you will force me to seek it, and convey yourself to prison and to Van-Diemen's-Land. I was willing to spare you, if you thought fit to make restitution of that which you have wrongly taken from Mr. Tracy; but let me tell you that you have no choice but to do so instantly, and without hesitation, or go before a magistrate on a charge of robbery."

"Stay, stay," said Mr. Scriptolemus Bond; "let us talk about the matter quietly. Perhaps we can arrange it.—Betty, Betty, give me a glass of brandy."

"Not a drop," said Chandos, sternly: "the matter needs no arrangement. You have heard what I demand, and what are my intentions, and you have but to answer 'Yes,' or 'No,' to this plain question—Will you deliver up the papers?"

"But you are so hasty, so hasty," cried Mr. Bond. "For Heaven's sake, shut the door, and let us speak two words. First of all, I must know who you are, sir; for one does not

trust papers of consequence to a stranger. I have been very ill, sir; or I should have seen Mr. Tracy before, and given the papers to himself. Very ill, indeed, I have been, with a nasty affection of the throat."

"You are likely to be troubled with a still nastier one," said Lockwood, drily.

"Mr. Bond," replied Chandos, "none of these evasions will serve your turn in the least. My name is Winslow, a friend of General Tracy and his brother. The fact of your having absconded is well known to every one: officers are in pursuit of you; you have been publicly advertised in the newspapers; and I have nothing to do but to take you before a magistrate, in order to send you to jail. Once more, then, I ask you, Will you deliver the papers?"

"I don't see what good it would do me," said Mr. Scriptolemus Bond; "I must see my way clearly, sir. Pray, are you one of the Winslows of Elmsly?"

Chandos was provoked by the rapid return

of his cool impudence; and he replied, "You shall see your way clearly, but it shall be to prison."

At the same time he laid his hand upon the worthy gentleman's collar again, and turning to Lockwood, added, "You can pinion him with my handkerchief, Lockwood. Then I and Faber can take him over to S——, while you remain here to see that nothing is abstracted till a proper search can be made."

"There, there, you are so very hasty," said the culprit; "now do be a little reasonable. Can you expect me to give up such sums without some small consideration for my pains."

"The consideration which you will get," answered Chandos, "is an escape from punishment."

"I must have something more than that," said Mr. Bond. "And now, sir, I will tell you in one word how we stand; for you seem to think you can have it all your own way; but you cannot. You have got the whip hand of me in one way, and I have got the whip hand

of Mr. Tracy in another. It is very lucky for him that you are not an officer, as I thought at first; for if you had been, not one shred of all his shares would he ever have seen in his life. You think it is in this house, or perhaps in my pocket; but you may search the premises and the pockets too, and if you find a single share you may eat me. Now, Mr. Winslow, I tell you there is nobody knows where the whole amount is but myself, and there it shall lie till it rots, unless I have ten thousand pounds for giving it up. That is my last word upon the subject."

"Then perhaps you will have the goodness to walk with me," said Chandos; "only just a little way, till we can get a postchaise to carry you before a magistrate; for ten thousand pounds you certainly will not have, or anything the least like it. If it had been a fifty pound note you demanded, just to help you into some foreign country, I might have given it to you on receiving the shares."

"But what am I to do when I get to a foreign country?" said Mr. Bond, coolly. "You for-

get, my dear sir, that a man must live. And if I am not to live comfortably, I might as well go to Van-Diemen's-Land, and let Mr. Tracy do without his shares."

"You had better give him something, Mr. Winslow," said Faber; "the poor devil must have something to start with."

"Thank you, thank you, Mr. Faber," said Mr. Bond; "that is the right view of the case. I wonder if you are any relation of Faber, my old college chum—a wonderfully clever fellow he was."

Chandos could have knocked him down; but the negociation was renewed by Faber and Lockwood; and, after a great deal of haggling and resistance, the rogue's demand was reduced to the sum of fifty pounds in hand, and a draft for five hundred pounds at seven days' date, to be drawn by him and accepted by Chandos on the spot. He moreover exacted from the young gentleman, acting as agent for Mr. Tracy, a receipt in full of all demands; and when these points were conceded, he drew the draft and the receipt with

his own hand, and even made an effort to get them both signed by Chandos, before he produced the papers.

Chandos, however, declined; and Lockwood laughed aloud, not without being joined in his merriment by Mr. Bond himself; for there is a point of roguery where all shame dies, and a man becomes vain of his very impudence.

"Well now, gentlemen," he said, at length, "just have the kindness to lock the door, that we may not be interrupted, and then we will see what can be done."

There was a rosewood table in the middle of the room, with a drawer in it; and, to the surprise of Chandos, it was to that drawer that the knave applied a key which he drew from his breeches-pocket.

"Why, I thought you told me I might search the house for these papers in vain," said Chandos, indignant at having been cheated.

"So you might," answered Mr. Bond, coolly, and drew open the drawer, which presented nothing but a void.

The next instant, however, Mr. Bond pressed his thumbs tight on the two sides of the drawer, and with a sudden click the bottom started up. Removing the thin piece of wood thus displaced, the worthy gentleman exhibited to the eyes of the bystanders some fifteen or twenty bundles of papers, neatly tied up and ticketed.

"Now sir," he said, "you have got my secret, be so good as to accept the draft and sign the receipt." He turned towards Chandos as he spoke; but that gentleman had suddenly seated himself at the other side of the table, and was leaning his head upon his hand, lost in thought. The words of Mr Bond roused him, however, and he replied, "Not till I am sure, sir, that all the shares are there. Give them to Mr. Faber, he will count them, and I will compare the number with the printed list which I have in my pocket-book."

This was accordingly done, much to Mr. Bond's mortification; for there is good reason to believe that it was his intention to retain

some part of the spoil, in order to drive a second bargain at an after period. But Chandos's precaution, in having cut out of a newspaper a full description of the shares purloined, frustrated this last attempt, and all were restored. There still remained in the drawer three bundles, similar to those which were given up, belonging probably to some other unfortunate clients of the worthy Scriptolemus Bond; but with these of course Chandos had no power to meddle, and he accordingly signed the papers which had been drawn up.

"Now," cried Mr. Bond, snapping his fingers as soon as he had received them, "I am a free man. This paper is as good as a passport; and to-morrow morning I shall be safe in France."

"I should think, Mr. Bond," said Chandos, with a somewhat contemptuous smile, "that there are things in that drawer which may yet take the wind out of your sail."

"A very pretty figure, but not applicable," said the rogue. "All the other gentlemen have

trusted to Mr. Tracy's catching me, and so his passport is, as the French say, *valable* for the present."

"I shall take care, at all events," said Chandos, "to make this matter generally known when I reach London."

"Now that is not fair, that is not fair," said Mr. Bond. "But I will be beforehand with you; and, as I think our business is concluded, I will go and pack up my trunk. Good morning, Mr. Winslow; good morning, gentlemen all."

Chandos did not deign to make any reply; but, taking the papers from Faber, walked out of the house.

The little boy, Tim, was found in the garden, near the gate, which he had burst open; for the proximity of Mr. Bond's strapping maidservant did not seem pleasant to him.

"Have you got it? have you got it?" cried the boy. And when Chandos, patting him on the head, answered in the affirmative, he clapped his little hands with joy, exclaiming,

"I will run and tell my mother; she will be so glad!"

"I will go with you, Tim," said Chandos; "for she must take you home to Northferry. All my plans are altered by this morning's work, Lockwood; and I must speed up to London without delay. I will be down, however, to-morrow or the day after, for a new light has broken upon me in an instant, which I think may lead to great results. I wish to Heaven I could see the memorandum which poor Roberts found."

"I can show it you, sir," said Faber; "for by his direction I took a copy of it, and have got it in my pocket-book."

It was produced in a moment, and, still standing in the open space before the cottage, Chandos read it attentively.

"Were these initials at the end copied accurately?" he said, turning to Faber, and pointing to some capital letters written under his father's name.

"Yes, Mr. Winslow," answered Faber; "as far as I could make them out, they stood

just so, in two lines. No. 2, I. S. B. E. No. 3, P. D."

"Then there is still a chance," said Chandos. "But come, I will away to London, and take advice upon these points also."

His companions could not at all make out what he meant; but the new light which he said he had got, greatly accelerated all Chandos's movements. With a quick step he led the way to the copse where he had left the gipsey woman; and having given little Tim into her charge, he explained to her all that had occurred; but in terms so brief that none but one of her rapid intelligence could have comprehended what he meant. Then promising to see her again soon, he hurried away towards the high-road to London, accompanied as before by Faber and Lockwood. As they approached the little inn where Chandos had stopped on the preceding day, but before they could see the road, the sound of rolling wheels was heard; and with an impatient exclamation he said, "There is the coach gone!"

But he was mistaken, for it still wanted a quarter of an hour of the time at which the stage appeared. Faber would fain have gone with him to London; but Chandos begged him to go over to Northferry, and wait for him, saying, "Sir William will not come there, you may be very sure."

In a few minutes after, the coach rolled up, the portmanteau was put in the boot, Chandos sprang upon the top, and after a short delay, away the vehicle rolled towards the great city.

"He's in a vast hurry," said Lockwood; "what can have struck him?"

"I don't know, I am sure," replied Faber; and they turned away.

CHAPTER XII.

It was about half-past four in the afternoon, when a common street-cabriolet drove up to a house in Berkeley Square, in the windows of which were exhibited large bills, stating that the lease and furniture would be sold by auction, on a certain day, then not far distant. Chandos Winslow sprang out of the vehicle, and knocked at the door, which was opened almost immediately by a coarse-looking woman, with her arms bare, and a wet cloth in her hand. In answer to the young gentleman's inquiry for Mr. Tracy, the charwoman replied, that he was not there; adding that he had left the house the day before with his family, but that she did not

know where he was gone. The next drive of the cabriolet was to Green Street; but there Chandos paid the driver before he got out. He then knocked at General Tracy's door, and the face of his old servant, who soon appeared, showed him at once, that no favourable change had taken place in the circumstances of the family.

"My master and Mr. Tracy are both out, sir," he said, even before he was asked; "but Miss Rose is in the drawing room."

"Are they all well?" asked Chandos.

"Pretty well; but very sad," replied the man. "Miss Emily, indeed, is not very well; and has not been out of her room to-day."

"I hope I bring them all good news," replied Chandos, willing to lighten the grief even of an attached dependent. "I will, therefore, make bold, to go up at once, my good friend, without being announced:" and walking rapidly up the stairs, he opened the drawing-room door.

Rose was seated at a table, writing; for

she had not heard the sound of a footfall on the well-carpeted stairs: but, the moment Chandos entered the room, she looked up; and though there were still tears in her eyes, a low exclamation of pleasure broke from her lips, when she saw him.

"Oh, Chandos!" she said, "I was writing to you, by my uncle's permission; for we thought you had left town yesterday—indeed, the people at the hotel said so."

"I did, dearest Rose," he answered; "but I have come back to-day on business of importance."

"I am exceedingly glad of it," replied Rose, as Chandos seated himself beside her; "not alone because I am glad to see you; but because you can answer in person the questions which I was going to put;—and yet I do not know how I can put them, now you are here."

"What!—between you and me, dear Rose?" said Chandos. "Can you have any hesitation in asking Chandos Winslow anything? Tell me frankly, my beloved what it

is you wish to know; and I will answer at once.'

"Why, the fact is this," said Rose, looking down at the letter she had been writing, till the rich beautiful hair fell over her fair face, "the creditors have, this morning, returned an unfavourable answer. They will not consent to my uncle's proposal. They will not permit the reservation of ten thousand pounds from the sale of his estate for Emily, and the same for myself; though they do not object to the sum appropriated to purchase an annuity for my uncle and papa. Emily at once begged that she might not be considered for a moment; and so did I: but my uncle said, that, in my case, he was not a free agent; for that he had promised that sum of ten thousand pounds to you: and that he could not even propose to withdraw from his word. I took upon me, Chandos, to answer for you; but he said that the proposal must come from yourself, if at all, when you knew the whole circumstances; and I had even a difficulty in gaining permission to write to you, though

everything must be decided by half-past twelve the day after to-morrow. Was I wrong, Chandos, in what I said on your behalf?"

"No, dearest Rose, you were not wrong," answered Chandos; and then kissing her fair hand, he gazed with a look of mingled gaiety and tenderness in her face; adding, "and yet, my Rose, I do not think I shall consent after all."

"Not consent!" she exclaimed; and then, shaking her head, as she saw the bright look with which he regarded her, she said, "Nay, I know you better: you are jesting, Chandos."

"No, my Rose," he answered, "I am not jesting. But I will not tease you with suspense: what I mean, my love, is, that I do not think there will be any need of my consent; for I trust the clouds are passing away, and that your father's fortunes may be re-established, without the noble sacrifice your uncle proposes to make."

"The change must be soon, Chandos," said Rose, sadly; "for these people have

announced their intention of making him a bankrupt the day after to-morrow, if their demands are not complied with."

"The change has taken place, dear Rose," replied Chandos; "and I thank God that I have been made the instrument of bringing good news and comfort to you all. It is this which has brought me so suddenly back to town. But, hark! that is the General's knock, or I am mistaken."

"My father is with him," said Rose; "but tell me, dear Chandos, tell me the news. Let me be the first to give it him."

"It is that I have recovered all the property carried off by that villain, Bond," answered Chandos Winslow. "I have the whole of the shares with me now."

Rose clasped her hands in joy, and at the same moment the door opened, and the dejected face of Mr. Tracy appeared. He gazed for an instant sternly at the laughing countenance of his daughter, and then made a movement as if to quit the room; but Rose sprang up and cast her arms round him—

whispered some words in his ear, and then, in the excess of her joy, burst into tears.

"What? what?" cried Mr. Tracy. "I did not hear. What does she say? What does she mean?" and he turned towards Chandos with an eager and impatient look, while the foot of General Tracy was heard ascending the stairs.

"She has good news to give you, my dear sir," replied Chandos; "the best that you have received for some time; but I really must not take it from her lips. Be calm, be calm, dear Rose, and tell your father."

"Oh he has got them all!" cried Rose, still weeping; "all the shares—all that the wretched man carried off."

"You, you, Chandos?" cried Mr. Tracy.

"Got them all!" exclaimed General Tracy, pushing past his brother.

"All," replied Chandos; "at least all that were advertised. They are here, my dear sir. I never was so loaded with riches before;" and he produced the various packets from his pockets.

Mr. Tracy sat quietly down on the sofa, in profound silence; he did not touch the papers; he did not even look at them. His emotions were too strong, too overpowering; and he remained with his eyes bent upon the floor, till Rose sat down beside him, and took his hand in hers, when he threw his arms round her, and kissed her tenderly, whispering, "Go and tell our dear Emily, my child."

General Tracy in the meantime ran hastily over the shares, comparing them with a memorandum in his pocket-book. Then laid them down upon the table; and marching across to Chandos, shook both his hands heartily, but without a word. Chandos understood him, however, and it was enough. The next minute the old officer rang the bell; and on the servant appearing, said in a quiet tone, "Bring me the paper out of my room, Joseph."

As soon as he had got it, he set to work, with pencil in hand, upon the prices of the share market; and after a rapid calculation, looked with a triumphant smile to his brother,

saying, "Twenty-three thousand pounds to spare, Arthur. To-morrow, please God, they all go, for I shall never have peace till the cursed trash is out of the house. Now, Chandos, my dear boy, let us hear no more—."

But before Mr. Winslow could answer, Emily Tracy followed Rose into the room, and cast herself into her father's arms. Her next movement was to hold out her hand to Chandos, saying, "Oh, thank you, thank you! You have saved us from horrors. But how has it been done?"

"Why I have now my confession to make," answered Chandos; "and if I had been politic, I should have done it while the first pleasant surprise was upon you all; for I have taken upon me, Mr. Tracy, to act for you very boldly."

"Whatever you have promised, I will perform," answered Mr. Tracy, "and that with deep and heartfelt thanks; for you have saved me from disgrace which I could never have survived."

"If it be for twenty thousand pounds, it shall be paid gladly," said the General.

"Nay, it is not so bad as that," replied Chandos; "the worse part of my case, my dear sir, is, that, unauthorised, I have taken upon me to act as your agent, and in that quality to give the man a general release. As to the money, there was not any great difficulty; for I gave the scoundrel fifty pounds in hand to help him to France, and accepted his bill at seven days for the rest, to close the whole transaction at once; as at all events if I acted wrong, I could but be the loser of the sum. He demanded ten thousand pounds—."

"Well, let him have it," said General Tracy.

"No," answered Chandos, "I would not let him have it; but I engaged myself for five hundred; and it is for you to judge whether I acted right in so doing, knowing, as I did, that in this case time was of the greatest importance."

"You acted admirably," said Mr. Tracy; "and I have to thank you for your decision, as well as for your prudent management."

"If it had been in my hands, I fear I should have given him whatever he asked," said the old officer; "for the fearful idea of my brother being made a bankrupt—a bankrupt, Chandos, like a mere trader—would have swallowed up all cool prudence. But now tell us all about the how, the when, and the where you found this pitiful knave."

"Do you know, General," replied Chandos, "I fear I must leave that part of the tale untold for to-night. I have some matters of much moment on which I wish to have the best legal advice I can get; and I must seek it instantly. If I can obtain the opinion and directions I want to-night, I shall leave town early to-morrow. If not, I shall come in during the morning, and will tell you all."

"But do give me a hint, however slight," said Mr. Tracy: "it seems to me like a happy dream; and I fear I shall wake and find it unreal, unless I have some confirmation."

"All I can stop to say," replied Chandos, "is, that your little protegé, General, the gipsey boy, acted a great part in the ad-

venture; and gallantly did he perform it, I assure you, at the hazard of life and limb."

"I will make a soldier of him," answered the old officer; "I will buy him a commission. But there has been danger then, in this affair."

"Oh no!" replied Chandos; "only danger to the poor boy. But now I will bid you adieu. Farewell, dear Rose. The greatest happiness I have ever known in life, has been to bring you news which took a heavy load from your kind warm heart."

Chandos Winslow shook hands with the rest of the party, and was then leaving the room, when the General exclaimed, "Chandos, Chandos!" and followed him to the top of the stairs.

"My dear friend," said the officer, "you have done us the greatest service that man could render us; but, in so doing, you have removed obstacles to your own happiness. Rose and Emily, are, of course, my heiresses. I do not see why they should not have now the greater part of their future fortunes: for

I have no expenses; and now, with changed circumstances, it would not, of course, be so imprudent to marry, as it appeared some days ago. Poor Emily is sad; for she has heard from your brother, announcing his return to England; and claiming the completion of her engagement with him. I must take it in hand myself, I see; for I will not have the dear girl's happiness thrown away. Now, however, farewell: for I see you are in haste; but come in, whenever you return from your journey; and remember, that the causes which induced me to exact a promise of you, to refrain from pressing Rose to a speedy union have been removed. Only one word more; and that on business. Are you at the same hotel where you were the other day?"

"Yes," replied Chandos; "I left my baggage there as I came."

"Well then, I will send a cheque for the five hundred pounds there, this evening," said the General.

"Perhaps, it would be better," answered Chandos, "if you would have the kindness

to pay it into my account at Curtis's; as it is very possible, that I may not be home till very late to-night. Any time within a week will do."

"It shall be done to-morrow," replied the old officer; and they parted: Chandos to seek his friend, Sir ——, through courts and chambers; and the General, to rejoice with his brother on a deliverance from that which had seemed an inevitable disgrace not half-an hour before. General Tracy was a good, kind man; but, like everybody else in the world who fancies he has no prejudices, he had several; and those he had were strong. He looked upon it undoubtedly as a disgrace not to pay a just debt under any circumstances; but the sting of the calamity which had menaced his brother, was to him that he might be "made a bankrupt like a mere trader." There was the rub with General Tracy. If none but "gentlemen and soldiers" could be made bankrupts, he would not have felt it half as much, though he would have deplored it still. But to be put in the

Gazette like a ruined pork-butcher, that was terrible indeed! How strange it is, that in estimating disgraces, we never look to the act, but to the consequences!

CHAPTER XIII.

The ground-floor of Sir William Winslow's house at Elmsly, contained as splendid a suite of rooms as any in England; and nothing that taste could do to give grace to the decorations, or that skill could effect to afford that comfort of which we are so fond, had been neglected by the last possessor, during a period of three years before his death. Sir William Winslow, however, was in some sort a stranger to the house, which was now his own: for, during several years, great coldness had subsisted between himself and his father. He had spent much of his time on the Continent; and had not, in fact, been at Elmsly for two years, when he was summoned

thither in haste, a few hours before Sir Harry's death. The interview between himself and his brother Chandos at Winslow Abbey took place on the Tuesday; and on the Thursday following, about nine o'clock at night, he was seated in the large dining-room of the magnificent suite I have mentioned, with the clergyman of the parish opposite to him.

The table, looking like a little island, in the ocean of Turkey carpet which flowed around, was covered with the desert, and with sundry decanters of choice wines; and two servants handed the plates of fruit and preserves to their master, and their master's guest. When this ceremony had been performed, the attendants left the room; and a desultory conversation, mingled with wine, took place between Sir William and the clergyman. The latter was a stout, portly man, with a good deal of the animal in his original composition; but rigidly and pertinaciously kept down by a strong moral sense, and high religious feelings. The motives which had produced so speedy an invitation on the part

of Sir William Winslow were various: but one was, that Sir William did not like to be left alone. His own thoughts were unpleasant companions. Again, he was anxious to retrieve some part of the good opinions he had lost. He felt that he had undervalued character; and, of late, things had appeared important to him, which he had looked upon with contempt before. Amongst others, some sort of religious opinions began to be objects of desire. He did not much care what, for his notions on the subject were very indefinite; but he felt a want, a craving for something that could give him the support which he possessed not in his own heart—for something that would afford him hope, when there was nought within him but despair. He had heard—he knew, indeed—that the Christian religion promised pardon for offences, hope to the sinner, peace to the repentant. And he sent to the clergyman to seek a certain portion of religion, just as a thirsty labourer would send to a public-house for a jug of beer.

The conversation, as I have said, was of a desultory kind: the subject of religion was approached in a timid, uncertain sort of way by Sir William Winslow; more as an opening than anything else: and the clergyman answered in a few brief, but very striking words; which produced a deep effect. He treated the matter less doctrinally than philosophically, and in such a manner that Sir William Winslow was inclined to fancy what he said had a personal application to himself; although the good man had no such intention.

"It is beautifully and happily ordained," said the clergyman, in answer to something which had preceded, "that the commission of crime, and the reproaches of conscience, very frequently, by the desolation which they produce in worldly things, should awaken in us the conviction of another state; give us a sense of our immortality; and teach the man who has only known himself as a mere animal, that he possesses a spirit, to be lost or saved, to live for ever to punishment or felicity. That conviction once gained, and the question natu-

rally follows: 'What can I do to be saved?' The Word of God replies 'Repent;' and repentance to salvation is not unfrequently the consequence."

Sir William Winslow mused; but after a time he replied, in a discursive manner, "It is a curious consideration what this same spirit can be. I doubt not its existence; for I feel a moving power within me, apart from, and independent of, mere *will*. But what is it? I see it not. No one has ever seen it."

"Hold, hold," cried the clergyman; "you must not say that. The records of Scripture bear witness, that spirits have been seen; and it can be shown philosophically, that there is no reason for supposing such a thing impossible."

The worthy pastor had been set upon a subject which was a favourite one with him, and he went on, citing history after history, and instance after instance, to prove that, under certain circumstances, there were means of communication established between the dead and the living. He even went so far as

to argue that it would be absurd to suppose it otherwise; that granting that there is such a thing as spirit, and that spirit is immortal, all analogy would show that there must be a power in the disembodied of producing certain influences upon their brethren in the flesh. "You cannot point out any order of beings," he said, "from the most imperfect to the most perfect, which has not some knowledge and communication with those next to it in the great scale of animated nature."

Sir William Winslow listened, but replied not, keeping his teeth tight shut, and his lips compressed; and the clergyman proceeded in the same strain, till the clock struck ten, when he suddenly rose to depart.

His host would willingly have detained him a little longer; for, as I have said, he loved not to be alone; but he was too haughty to press it beyond one request; and the clergyman, who was a man of habits, always retired at ten.

When he was gone Sir William walked into the drawing-room and ordered coffee. He

took it very strong, and that agitated rather than calmed his nerves. He walked up and down for half-an-hour, and then he said to himself, "I will go and look over those letters. There is no use in going to bed, I should not sleep. He then ordered candles in the library; but he would not go thither till they were lighted. When that was done he walked slowly in, and took up some of the unopened letters with which the table was strewed. The second which he broke was signed "Overton;" and after having run his eye down the page, he threw it away with a look of anger. He would read no more, and sitting down in the large arm chair, where so often his father had sat, he gnawed his lip, with his eyes bent upon the ground.

The clock struck eleven, and Sir William started in his seat and counted it. A minute or two after, he took out his pocket-book, and drew from it a folded piece of vellum. He did not then look at the contents, however, but thrust it into a drawer of the table. Then, rising from his seat, he walked to the

window and looked out. It was a beautiful moonlight night, the soft, silvery rays resting on the lawns and woods of the park, and the little stars, faint and sleepy in the sky. He gazed for several minutes; but I know not whether he beheld anything but the objects of his own fancy. Then he walked up and down the room again, and twice stood for a moment or two opposite the drawer in the library table At length he suddenly pulled it open, took out the vellum, unfolded it, and read the strange contents.

"By ——," he exclaimed, after thinking for a moment, "this is devilish strange! it is the very day she drowned herself!" and the vellum trembled in his hand. "I won't go. Why should I go?"

He looked at the writing again: "She will come and fetch me!" he repeated, with his lip curling; "I should like to see her;" and the proud spirit seemed to rise up again in full force. But then he shook his head sadly, and murmured, "Poor girl! she told me once

before she would come, and she did—to her own destruction."

The clock struck the half hour, and in great agitation—agitation scarcely sane—Sir William Winslow walked up and down the room again, with a wild, irregular step, his eyes rolling in his head, as if he saw some strange sight, and his hand frequently carried to his brow, and pressed tight upon his forehead.

At the end of about ten minutes, he stopped, gazed vacantly upon the floor, and then, with a sudden start, exclaimed aloud, "I will go to her! She shall not say that I feared her. She shall not come here—no, no—yet I believe, alive or dead, she would do it, if she said it.—It is her hand too. That name, how often have I seen it with different feelings! Poor Susan!" and walking out of the library, and through the corridor, he took his hat and quitted the house.

The moon lighted him on his way through the park. He could see every pebble in the

ground; but yet his step was as irregular as if the way had been rough and rude. Nevertheless he went very quick; he seemed impatient; and when he found the park-gates shut, he did not wait to awaken the people of the lodge, but cut across to a stile which went over the paling; and there he issued forth into the road. About two hundred yards before him rose the church, with its good broad cemetery, encircled by a low wall. The moon shone full on the white building, rising like a spectre amongst the dark trees and fields around.

Sir William Winslow stopped suddenly, crossed his arms upon his chest, and thought. Then the heavy bell of the church clock began to strike the hour of midnight; and walking rapidly on he reached the gate of the church-yard, while the sound of the last stroke still swung trembling in the air. He passed through the little turnstile, and walked up the path. There was a new tombstone close upon the right, which he had

never seen before; and his eyes fixed upon it. The letters of the inscription were all plain in the moonlight, and the name "Roberts" stared him in the face, with these words following, "Brutally murdered, by some person unknown, on the fifth of February, one thousand eight hundred and forty-five, in the sixtieth year of his age."

Sir William Winslow trembled violently, and murmured, "Who has done this? Who has done this?"

His courage had well nigh deserted him entirely; and he paused, hardly able to go on, when a voice from the farther side of the cemetery asked, "Are you come?"

He knew the tongue, though it had sounded sweeter in other days; and striding forward, he answered, "I am here! Where are you?"

"Here," answered the voice from the direction of a tall mausoleum, over the mouth of the Winslow vault: "Come on!"

He advanced, but could perceive no one.

He walked round the monument; the space was quite clear around. "Where are you? What would you with me?" he cried.

"I am where I have a right to be," answered the voice from a spot apparently below his feet. "I am amongst those from whom sprang a man who promised to make me one of them, and broke his promise. I am amongst your dead, William Winslow! Your father is on my right hand, and your mother on my left. Your place is here beside me, and will not be long vacant, if your spirit does not bow itself to repentance, your strong will does not yield to right."

"God of Heaven!" he cried, laying his hand upon the gate in the iron railing which surrounded the tomb, and shaking it violently; but instantly there was a low laugh, and a voice said, "Poor fool!—You ask," continued the voice, "what I would with you? For myself, I seek nothing. You can neither harm nor benefit me more. The time is past. The hour is gone by; and what you could once have done, is now beyond your

power. But for our boy, you can do much; you can atone to the mother, by love to the child. Take him to yourself; own him as yours; and oh! above all things, teach him to avoid and to abhor such crimes as you yourself have committed."

"Our boy!" cried Sir William Winslow, "I knew not that you had one, Susan. Oh, Susan, in mercy, in pity, tell me where he is?"

"Ask your brother," answered the voice; "ask that kind, noble brother, whom you have wronged, who has been a father to your child, when you were depriving himself of his inheritance; who has taught him virtue, and honour, and the love of God. He will give him to your arms, if you show yourself worthy of him. Thus much for myself, William Winslow; but, oh that there were any power in prayers, to make you grant that which is needful for another."

"Speak, speak!" said he eagerly; "I will grant whatever you ask. I wronged you basely, I know; I broke my plighted word;

I forfeited my honour given. Speak, Susan! Let me make atonement, as far as it can now be made."

"The other for whom I prayed is yourself," answered the voice. "Oh, William Winslow, beware. The cup is well nigh full. You cannot wake the dead; but you can do justice to the living. Bend your knees to God, and implore mercy; humble your heart even before men, and do not persist in evil. Restore what you have wrongly taken, and all may go well; but hear the last words that ever you will hear on earth, from her you wronged on earth: If you persist in the evil you can by a word redress, the crime that you think is buried for ever in darkness, will rise up into light by the consequences of your own acts. Such is judgment—such is retribution—such is the will of God. Amen.'"

"But of what particular wrong do you speak?" asked Sir William Winslow.

There was no answer, and he exclaimed, "Speak, Susan! speak!"

All was silent, and again and again he

endeavoured to obtain a reply, but in vain.

At length, moving slowly away, he passed round the other side of the church, to avoid the grave of the steward, and soon reached the park. He hurried homeward; but he entered not his own house so speedily. For two long hours he walked backwards and forwards upon the terrace, with his head bent down and his eyes fixed upon the sand. Who shall undertake to detail the terrible turns of the struggle then within him. It was a battle between the whole host of darkness and the cherubin of the Lord. Fear, and Doubt, and Pride, and Vanity, and all their tribes were arrayed against the small, bright legion which had gained one small spot of vantage ground in his heart. Doubt and Fear he knew must remain for ever on this side of the grave, to hold that part of the castle to which he had given them admittance; but their very presence there made him anxious to exclude them from the rest; and he repeated a thousand times in spirit, "Would

to God I had not burned that will! Would to God that aught would afford me a fair excuse for acting as it dictated! What can I do? Where can I turn? Heaven send me, light and help!"

Still the internal strife lasted long; and when at length he re-entered the house, body and mind felt worn and exhausted. His valet gazed at him with one of his quiet, serpent looks, and said, "You seem ill, sir. Had you not better have some cordial?"

"No, no," answered Sir William Winslow, turning from him with a faint shudder; "I want nothing but rest. It matters not."

But that night he did not lie down to rest without bending the knee, and imploring mercy and protection. It was the first time for many years. It was the first night, too, that he had slept for more than an hour at a time for several months; but now he remained in slumber undisturbed till ten o'clock, and when he woke he felt the effect of repose. He rose, threw on his dressing-gown, and approached the glass on his dressing-

table. He hardly knew the face that it reflected. He did not feel ill. Sleep had refreshed him; his limbs were strong and vigorous, but all colour had fled from his cheek. He was thenceforth as pale as the dead.

He then went to the window for air, and the first thing his eye lighted upon was his valet, advanced a step or two on the terrace, talking to a tall, stout man, of a very sallow complexion, in a long, brown great coat. Sir William Winslow's heart sunk, he knew not why. He did not like to see that Italian talking with any one since he had mentioned the spots of blood upon his coat; and he gazed for a moment at the servant as he stood with his back towards him, with feelings of pain and alarm. Suddenly a change came over him. He raised his head high, and his proud nostril expanded. "It matters not," he said to himself; "I will be no man's slave long. I will do Chandos justice—I will provide for my poor boy—see him—embrace him—and then that scoundrel shall go forth to do his worst."

With these thoughts he rang his bell sharply, and soon after descended to breakast. His meal was speedily concluded; and going into the library, he wrote for some time. One paper which he covered seemed to be a mere note; but for the other he consulted several times a law book, which he took down out of the library.

When that was done, he rang again, and ordered the servant who appeared to send the butler, the bailiff, and the housekeeper to him, all together. Before they could be collected he had folded the note and addressed it to "Chandos Winslow, Esq.," and when the three persons he had sent for appeared, with some surprise at their unusual summons, he said, I wish you to witness my signature of this paper. Then taking the pen, he wrote his name at the bottom, saying, "This is my last will and testament." The witnesses put their hands to the paper and withdrew, each observing how ill their master looked, and arguing by the sudden signature of his will that he felt more unwell than he appeared.

The event became a matter of gossip in the housekeeper's room, and the Italian valet rubbed his forehead and looked thoughtful; but he had not much time for consideration before he was called to carry a note, which had just arrived, to Sir William, who had gone to his dressing-room previous to going out. The man looked at it somewhat wistfully as he took it up; but he dared not finger the envelope, and it was delivered without the contents having escaped by the way.

"Countermand my horse," said his master; "I will write an answer directly. Some one is waiting, of course."

"Yes, Sir William," replied the valet, and his master walked out at once, and descended to the library. There, he again spread out the letter before him, and read to the following effect:—

"The Golden Bull, Elmsly,
"May, 1845.

"Sir,—I am directed by my client, Chandos Winslow, Esq., to inform you, that from

documents lately in the possession of Mr. Roberts, deceased, and from private marks thereon, in the handwriting of the late Sir Harry Winslow, of the true intent and meaning of which private marks the said Chandos Winslow is cognizant, he has reason to believe, that an authentic copy of the last will and testament of the aforesaid Sir Harry Winslow, Bart., signed with his name, and dated, '25th June, 1840,' is still to be found in a certain depository, at Elmsly House; hitherto unsearched by you: and, in consequence, I beg, in his name, to request that you will cause search to be made in the said place or depository, with all convenient speed, in the presence of myself, his attorney, or any other person or persons whom he may select: or otherwise, that you will sanction and permit the said search to be made by the said Chandos Winslow, Esq., or myself, as his attorney, in presence of yourself, or any other person or persons by yourself selected, as witnesses that the search

or examination is well and properly made, without fraud or favour, by, SIR,

"Your most obedient Servant,

"HENRY MILES,

"Attorney-at-Law and Solicior to the firm of Miles, Furlong, and Miles, S——."

"P.S. Sir, I am directed by my client to inform you, that he has no desire to be present in person at the proposed search, as he judges that, under circumstances, his visit to Elmsly might not be agreeable."

When he had read, Sir William Winslow held the letter up with a trembling hand, and there was evidently a renewed struggle in his bosom. But his eye rested on the note he had written to Chandos; and, perhaps, he compared the feelings with which he had spontaneously addressed his brother, with those which were now excited by irritated pride, at what he conceived an attempt to drive him to that which he had been willing to do undriven. At all events, he smiled—very likely, at the first discovery of the secret springs of his own actions; and sitting down

again—for he had risen for a moment—he wrote the following words :—

"Sir William Winslow presents his compliments to Mr. Miles, and begs to inform him that he is perfectly at liberty to make the proposed search at Elmsly. Sir William, however, would prefer that it should be made in the presence of his brother, Mr. Chandos Winslow, whom he will be happy to see at Elmsly, as soon as possible, for that purpose. He sincerely hopes that the will may be found, as it may save some trouble; but, at the same time, be begs Mr. Miles to forward, or present the inclosed note (written some hours ago) to Mr. Winslow, begging him to understand that Sir William adheres to the contents, irrespective of the result of the search now demanded.

"Elmsly, &c."

The note was immediately despatched, and the master of the house leaned his head upon his hand in deep thought. He was disturbed by the entrance of the valet, who advanced

with a low and humble bow, saying, "Could I speak with you for a moment, sir?"

"No," replied the baronet, sternly; "I am engaged."

"But, Sir William," said the man.

"Leave the room, sir!" thundered his master; "did you not hear me?"

The man obeyed; but as he quitted the library, he muttered, "Oh! very well."

Sir William Winslow felt he had gained something during the last few hours. It was courage of a peculiar sort. The day before he would not have found resolution so to answer a man, who, to a certain degree, had his life and honour in his hands. Now he had no hesitation; and as he sat and thought, he asked himself if it was the having taken the first step towards atonement which had restored to him his long-lost firmness. He thought it was; and he resolved to go on boldly. Perhaps he mistook the cause of the change in himself. His was one of those quick and irritable dispositions which cannot bear suspense of any kind, which will

rather confront the utmost peril than wait an hour in fear; and the very fact of having taken a strong resolution gave the power to execute it. But still he fancied that the purpose of doing right, of making atonement, was the result of his renewed vigour; and the mistake was salutary.

In the meantime, the man whom he had dismissed from his presence so abruptly went out to one of the several backdoors of the house, and looked about, casting his eyes over the wood, which there came near the house. For a minute or two he seemed to be looking for something and not discovering it; but then, he beckoned with his finger, and a dark man, in a long great-coat, came across from under the trees and joined him.

They spoke in low tones, but eagerly, for about five minutes; and at last the dark man said, "No; we had better work separate. I will manage it, you'll see; and you can do the same if you do but frighten him enough. I must speak with the woman first; but I'll

be back in an hour, if you think he'll be alone then."

"I dare say he will," answered the valet, "there are not many people come here now; but if there should be any one, you can wait about till they are gone."

"Very well," replied the other; and with a nod and a low laugh, he turned away, and left the Italian standing at the door.

CHAPTER XIV.

Chandos Winslow sat in the little village inn at Elmsly, with his keen old solicitor from S——; who had, as the reader has seen, just mingled in a note to Sir William Winslow, a certain degree of lawyer-like formality, with an affectation of common-place ease, which he thought was masterly in its kind. They were awaiting the reply; and the lawyer calculated upon either one or two courses being adopted by the baronet to meet the pungent contents of his missive. "Sir William," he said, addressing Chandos, "will, I imagine, either beg to know where the will is supposed to be concealed, promising to cause search to be made himself; or else he

will roughly refer us to his solicitors in London. Mark my words, if he does not. At all events, that last hit of our's yesterday—coming in, and finding the rough draught of the will in Roberts's handwriting, amongst the papers in the cabinet left to you with the other things—was capital. Hang me, Mr. Winslow, if I did not think for a minute that it was the will itself. However, as it is, we shall have an excellent case of it; and I should not wonder if it were to go through every court in England, up to the House of Lords."

"A pleasant prospect," said Chandos, drily; and he fell into the silence of expectation.

"Is Mr. Chandos Winslow here?" asked a good, clear, round voice, upon the stairs about five minutes after; and starting up, Chandos opened the door, when, to his surprise, he beheld Lockwood with the little boy, Tim Stanley.

"Well, I hope I've got him here in time," said Lockwood, "though I could not get

over by noon, as you wished; for you see, Chandos, it is a good long round first to Northferry and then to Elmsly; and I did not receive the message till five this morning."

Chandos gazed on him in surprise, but shook him warmly by the hand, and caressed the boy, saying, at the same time, "I am glad to see you both, Lockwood; but I certainly had no notion you were coming."

"Didn't you send?" exclaimed Lockwood. "Then who the devil did, I wonder? I had a message this morning shouted in at my window, at five, to bring the boy over here by noon to-day to meet you. But now we must have some dinner; for I am hungry enough, and the boy is ravenous. What have you done with Faber? Where's Atra Cura, if he is no longer behind the horseman?"

"We left him at S——," replied Chandos; "he was afraid to come within ten miles of Elmsly."

"He's a poor creature," cried Lockwood, "a very poor creature indeed. There is

something in such weakness that debases prosperity, and makes even misfortune contemptible; though it is often an element of grandeur, as Seneca justly says: 'Nihil æque magnam apud nos admirationem occupet, quam homo fortiter miser.'"

"He's a little chicken-hearted," said the lawyer; "but he's very right to keep out of harm's way when he is not paid for going into it. And now, Mr. Winslow, I had better ring for something to eat for the nice little fellow—a son of your's, I presume—we can take a bit of lunch at the same time. It is an agreeable way of occupying time."

The luncheon was ordered; and though Chandos denied the degree of relationship to little Tim imputed, the lawyer remained in the same opinion. It did not at all spoil Tim's appetite, however. He was not at all aware that he had ever had a father, and would quite as soon have had Chandos in that capacity as any one else. He set to heartily then; and so did Lockwood, and eke the lawyer; but before the latter had

eaten two mouthfuls, the messenger who had been sent to Elmsly returned with a letter for him.

"Soon decided!" said Mr. Miles; "he has not taken long to consider." And after opening the cover containing the epistle addressed to himself, he held the one enclosed in his hand, without looking at the direction, while he read the other.

"Well, this takes me by surprise!" said the lawyer; "remorse of conscience, evidently! Read that, Mr. Winslow; the other is for you too."

Chandos took the letters, and read first, with much wonder, the one which had been opened; and then broke the seal of the other, which contained these words:—

"Come to me, Chandos. Let us forget the past, and be really brothers for the future. If you can show me, as I think you hinted, the particulars of the last will, it shall be acted upon by me as if it were before me. If not, I will put it in force as far as I recollect it; for I certainly did read it once; but

that is a long time ago, and I do not perfectly remember it. At all events, come to me; for there is a sort of heavy presentiment upon me, that my life will not last long; and I would fain die in friendship with my brother.

"Yours,

"WILLIAM WINSLOW."

"It must be so, indeed!" said Chandos Winslow; "this change is too great, too sudden to be in the ordinary course of events. Some severe illness must be hanging over him. Come, Mr. Miles, let us go at once. Lockwood will stay with the boy till we return."

"Nay, I will go with you part of the way, at least," said Lockwood; "and you shall tell me what is the drift of all this as you go: for I am in darkness. Tim can take care of himself; can't you, Tim?"

Chandos threw Lockwood his brother's two letters; and, while he read them over in silence, little Tim declared he could take care of himself very well. Lockwood, how-

ever, took his hat and accompanied his half-brother and the lawyer on their way, sometimes asking a question, sometimes falling into a fit of thought.

"I'll tell you what, Chandos," he said at length, "I cannot help thinking there is some trick in all this. I never saw such a sudden change. Why it is only three nights ago that he growled at you like a dog."

"No, no, there is no trick," replied Mr. Winslow; "but I fear there is some serious illness, either commenced or approaching, which has thus depressed his spirits, and given conscience power to make her voice heard in the stillness of the passions."

"Well, I am not quite satisfied of that," answered Lockwood, "and shall be glad to hear the result; but I will not go in with you. We were never friends, and the sight of me might raise the devil again. I shall look out for you, however, as you come back."

"I will lead you the shortest way," said Chandos, speaking to the lawyer, who was approaching the great gates; "that path takes

one half a mile round;" and proceeding along the road, he did not enter the park till he reached a small doorway, which stood open during the day.

The path with which this doorway communicated, led through the depth of a splendid wood of Spanish chestnuts, divided by somewhat formal alleys, which crossed each other in various directions. When Chandos and his companions had walked on not more than two hundred yards, they could hear the voices of two persons speaking vehemently, and at the first traversing alley which they came to, they all turned their heads to the right, whence the sounds proceeded. Perhaps eighty or ninety yards from them, under the green shade of the wide leafy trees, were standing a man and a woman. The man Chandos immediately recognized as his companion in the stage-coach some days before, and in the woman, whose face was turned towards them, he saw Sally Stanley. She was throwing about her arms in wild and even fierce gesticulation, and in the stillness of their footfalls over the

turf, he could hear her exclaim, "If you do, a curse will cleave to you and destroy you, which never failed yet—a curse which will," —but then her eyes lighted on the three persons who were passing, and she darted in amongst the trees.

The man followed her, after taking a look round; and Lockwood asked, "Do you know who those are?"

"Tim's mother," answered Chandos; "and one of her tribe, I suppose."

"One of the gipsies, if you mean that," replied Lockwood; "and the worst fellow amongst them. If I catch him, I will break every bone in his skin. He gave me a blow when I had my hands tied, and I will not forget him. But as to Sally Stanley being one of the gipsies, Chandos, that is a mistake."

"Then my suspicions are correct;" said Mr. Winslow, with an inquiring look at the other's face. How was she saved from the river?"

"That I don't know," replied Lockwood;

"the gipsies pulled her out, I suppose. But I thought you must have known all about it, from your fondness for the boy. If you come to calculate, you will see whose son he must be."

"How strange are the turns of fate!" said Chandos; and the whole party fell into deep thought.

Two or thee minutes after, Lockwood halted, saying, "I will go out into the open part of the park, and wait for you under a tree; for I am anxious to have the first news: and Chandos and the lawyer walked on to the house, which was not more than a quarter of a mile in advance. When they were gone, Lockwood sauntered up and down for about ten minutes—perhaps it might be a little more; for he was a man accustomed to solitude and his own thoughts; so that lonely time flew fast with him. At length, however, he thought he heard a light step running; and the next moment Sally Stanley was by his side. Her face was eager, and her eyes sparkling, but not with joy.

"Lockwood," she said, in a low tone, "Lockwood, run up to the village; to the inn."

"Has anything happened to the boy?" cried Lockwood, with a look of apprehension.

"No, no!" answered the woman; "but run up—find out what the two men are doing over here—the two men from S——. Listen to what they say—and save him if they are seeking him."

Her meaning was not very clear; but there was so much apprehension and impatience in her look, that Lockwood, saying "Well, well, I suppose I shall find out what you mean when I get there," turned away and left her.

His long legs and his quick steps soon brought him to the door of the Golden Bull, at Elmsly; but all seemed quiet on the outside of the house, at least. There was a little sort of gig, with the horse taken out, standing in the road, and no other thing to attract attention. Lockwood entered the house, and was about to walk up to the room where the boy had been left, when in what was called

the parlour, on the left, he heard some mens' voices speaking; and in he went.

The room contained two men and a servant girl, putting down some beer and glasses before them; and Lockwood sat down and asked for a glass of ale. Two or three sentences passed between the previous occupants of the room, which seemed principally to refer to their own dinner; but there were words mingled with their discourse which made the last comer lend an attentive ear; and before the ale was brought to him, he rose, walked slowly out of the room with a careless air, hurried up stairs, and spoke a few eager words to the boy Tim.

He was answered only by a look of quick intelligence; and after receiving a few words of clear direction as to the way to Elmsly House, Tim snatched up his cap and ran off.

Lockwood then descended to the parlour again, drunk his ale, and took up an old newspaper that lay on one of the tables.

CHAPTER XV.

We must now turn to Sir William Winslow again. He remained for full a quarter of an hour in thought; but then he rose, and walked backwards and forwards in the library, with a quick step: there was a struggle within him. While he had remained seated, old feelings, old habits of thought, old vices of the mind began to return upon him. None of the devils which torture and tempt humanity ever give up their prey without strife; and they wrestled with his spirit still; but remorse, and wearing, constant apprehension, had shaken their hold of him, and he was strong enough to cast them off. There came too, in aid of better feelings that

longing for companionship, for the support of love or friendship, which grows upon the heart when worldly enjoyments fail. He thought, what a pity it was that he and Chandos had not lived together in affection; he knew that it was his own fault, and he resolved it should be his own fault no longer. Yet he doubted himself—yet he feared; and at length, after he had walked up and down at the same hurried pace for full three-quarters of an hour, he started with a feeling almost of irritation, when the servant opened the door, and announced that Mr. Winslow and another gentleman were in the drawing-room.

"Show them in," said Sir William Winslow, and he stood leaning on the library table, watching the door.

The expression of his brother's countenance at once did away all that was painful in his feelings. It was full of kindness and tenderness, and advancing with a quick step, Chandos took Sir William's proffered hand in both his own, and pressed it warmly.

"This is very kind of you, William," he said. "But, good God! how ill you look! In Heaven's name send for some physician."

"No, no, Chandos," said Sir William Winslow; "there is no need. I have gone through much mental pain since I saw you—but of that no more: let us for the future be brothers indeed. But now to business: you may search where you please for the will you mention; and I trust in God you may find it."

"No, William," said Chandos, frankly. "I will tell you where I think it is. Search for it yourself; I trust you fully."

Mr. Miles pulled him by the sleeve, saying, "But my dear sir, my dear sir—"

"Hush," said Chandos, sternly.—"I think, William," he continued, "from a memorandum I have found, that the will is in the drawer of that table; and I and my solicitor will quit the room, if you please, while you search."

"Not for the world," replied Sir William Winslow. "But you are mistaken, Chandos;

the will is not there, as you may see;" and he drew out the drawer with a sharp pull. There appeared nothing but a small piece of vellum, folded like a letter, and the lawyer immediately exclaimed, "There it is!"

"No, sir, it is not," answered Sir William Winslow, with a frown; "that is a letter addressed to me, nothing more."

Chandos smiled, saying, "That is only a part of the contents of the drawer. Press your thumb tightly on the right side at the back, William. The memorandum is marked with the initials, S. D. E., which I interpret 'Secret Drawer, Elmsly.' Now, I know of no secret drawer but the one in that table, which I have once or twice seen my father open."

Sir William instantly pressed on the inside, as he was directed, but without effect; and he turned towards the bell, saying, "I will have it broken open; for I feel it yield under my hand."

"Stay, stay, said Chandos, let me try;" and coming round to that side of the table,

he put his hand into the drawer, and pressed hard. At the first touch the piece of wood which formed the false back flew out, and an inner drawer was pushed forward by a spring from behind. It contained a considerable number of papers, and a small basket full of gold coin. At the top of the papers, however, was a packet, sealed with black, and marked, in a lawyer's hand, "Last will and testament of Sir Harry Graves Winslow, Bart." Underneath was written, in Sir Harry's own handwriting, "For Chandos Winslow, Esq. To be opened before the funeral."

Chandos did not touch the will; but Sir William took it out and put it into his hands, saying at the same time, "Stay! We had better have more witnesses before you open it;" and ringing the bell, he ordered the butler to be sent.

"My brother, Mr. Winslow," he said, when the man appeared, "has pointed out to me this secret drawer, which I had not before discovered; and in it we have found a

paper, which seems to be a later will of my father's than that already read. I wish you to be present while it is examined. Now, Chandos, let us hear the contents."

Chandos opened it, and placed the paper which he found within the cover in the hands of Mr. Miles, who, with spectacles on nose, proceeded to read it aloud, having first ascertained that it was duly signed and attested.

The purport of the will was precisely that which Faber had stated. Winslow Abbey, and the estates attached, with all the furniture, books, and pictures in the house, were left to Chandos Winslow; but the property was charged with an annuity of four hundred a year to Faber. A few legacies were given to servants. The sum of five thousand pounds, in lieu of all other demands, was assigned to Lockwood; and all other property, real and personal, including a large sum in public securities, of the existence of which Sir William had been hitherto ignorant, was left to the deceased baronet's eldest

son. The clergyman of the village, and a gentleman in London, were named as executors, together with Mr. Roberts, whom Sir Harry probably expected to act for all.

When the will had been read, Sir William took his brother's hand, and pressed it in his own. Then nodding his head to the butler, he said, "You may go. Now, my good sir," he continued, turning to Mr. Miles, "the best thing you can do is to take that paper down to the gentleman there named, in the village of Elmsly; tell him how we found it, and ask him if he is prepared to act. In fact, take all the necessary steps for substituting this will for the other. I shall of course consent to all that is required. There may be some difficulty indeed as to the Abbey property, in regard to which I have acted rashly; but that I must settle as I can. My brother will join you in a little time, at the inn. At present I wish to speak to him for a few minutes."

He spoke in somewhat of his old imperious tone; and the lawyer took the hint, and departed rapidly.

"And now, Chandos," said Sir William Winslow, in a voice that trembled with emotion, "tell me one thing. Have you not a boy under your charge, a boy of about seven or eight years old?"

"I have, William," answered Chandos, with a faint smile; "and as fine and brave a boy he is as ever lived."

"Is he not my son?" demanded Sir William Winslow, in a low tone.

"I have every reason to think he is," answered Chandos.

"Where is he? where is he?" exclaimed his brother. "I must see him, Chandos; I must have him here."

"That you can have in half-an-hour," answered Chandos: "I left him at the village inn."

"Oh, send him to me!" cried Sir William: "I knew not she had had a child. Yet, stay one moment; promise me, Chandos, as a man of honour, if anything befalls to take me hence, that you will be a father to my boy."

"Be you sure I will, William," answered Chandos Winslow. "Is there anything more?"

"Yes, one thing more," replied his brother, taking up the paper he had written in the morning; "I have there put down my wishes —informally perhaps—in the shape of a will. I have named you my executor; and I am sure that, whether the will be valid or not, you will carry it out."

"Upon my honour," answered Chandos Winslow, "if you have left the boy your whole property, it shall be his."

"No, I have not done that," said Sir William; "I have not wronged you, Chandos, in this at least: and now send me my boy as soon as may be; but come yourself afterwards. Take the will with you. No one can tell what may happen from hour to hour in this life."

"That is true, William;" answered Chandos; "but yet I trust there is no such imminent danger, though it is evident you are far from well. If you would see a physician, you

would really greatly oblige me; but I will speak with you more on that subject, when I return, which shall be ere long."

The moment his brother was gone, Sir William Winslow rang the bell, and sent for his valet. The man entered with a peculiary placable and even smiling look; a visitation with which his countenance was seldom troubled. But it was soon changed into one of dark malevolence; for the first words of his master were:—"I sent for you, Benini, to tell you that I shall have no further need of your services after the end of a month. You have warning to that effect. You may go."

"Very well, Sir William," replied the man; "but it might be better for you to think."

"I have thought," answered Sir William, sternly: "you may retire, I say."

The man bowed, and left the room; and Sir Winslow murmured, "That is done—I will not live in fear. Death is better."

"There is a man at the hall-door wishes to speak with you, sir;" said a footman, enter-

ing almost the moment after the valet had quitted the room.

"I am busy," said his master; "I cannot be disturbed—Who is he?"

"I do not know, sir," answered the servant; "a tall, strong man, well dressed enough; but with a face like a gipsey, or a mulatto—he said he must and would see you, as he had business of importance to speak about."

"Well, if he must and will see me, send him in," said the baronet; "I think I will soon dispatch his business."

The servant retired, and soon returned with the same personage whom Chandos had seen speaking in the park, with her whom we have called hitherto Sally Stanley.

"What do you want with me?" asked Sir William Winslow, fiercely.

His visitor paused till the door was shut, and then replied, in a rude, familiar tone, "I want a little money, Sir William; that's the truth. But if I get money, I can give money's worth."

Sir William Winslow's heart sunk. "Indeed!" he said; "pray, what can you give?"

"Silence," answered the man.

"Silence!" repeated the baronet in a low voice; "silence about what?"

"I will tell you a little story, sir," was the answer; "I am a poor man, who get my living how I can. On the fifth of last February, I was in the grounds of Northferry-house, from a little before five till an hour or two after. Now, I want a thousand pounds. When I have got it, I will go abroad and join some of my own people in another country."

Sir William Winslow had fallen into a deep fit of thought, and his lips were very white. Though conscience had cowed him, at first, even with the valet; yet, on further consideration, his courage, as we have seen, had revived. He had argued, too, that the Italian could prove little or nothing unsupported by the evidence of others. But this case was different. He dared not grapple with it. His brain seemed to reel. His

heart felt as if the blood stood still in it. The man had been on the spot at the time; he had evidently seen all. His testimony joined to that of the Italian was death. Would he brave it? Would he dare him to do his worst? Would he undergo trial—risk condemnation? He thought of his son, of his brother, of his family, of the honour of his name and race: and when the man went away, the basket, full of gold pieces, which had been found in the secret drawer, was empty.

The unhappy man whom he left, sat for a few minutes with his hands covering his eyes. Who shall tell the agony of his thoughts? He was roused by some one tapping at one of the windows which descended to the ground; and starting up, he beheld a beautiful boy, with a sun-burned face, plainly, but well dressed, gazing in.

Sir William strode forward, threw the window open, and gazed at the boy with strange and new sensations: "Who are you, my dear?" he said, taking his hand, and

leading him in. "Did Mr. Winslow send you?'

"No," answered the boy; "I came to seek him: Mr. Lockwood sent me."

"But do you not live with Mr. Winslow?" asked Sir William; "is he not kind to you?"

"Oh! that he is," replied the boy, warmly. "But is he here?"

Sir William Winslow cast his arms round him, held him to his heart, and wept, without reply.

"No harm has happened to him?" asked the boy, anxiously.

"Oh no!" said his father; "no. He promised to send you down to me; but he must have taken a different road from that by which you came. What did you want with him? Do you know who I am?"

"No, I do not," replied the boy; "but if you are Sir William Winslow, his brother, I was to tell *you*, in case he was gone"—

"And what were you to tell?" demanded the baronet. "I am Sir William Winslow."

"Then put down your ear, and I will whisper it," said the boy; "for I was not to let any one else hear. Mr. Lockwood said that you were to mount your horse and ride over to Winslow Abbey as fast as possible, by the east gates of the park; because there are two constables come over from S——, drinking at the inn; and he heard them say that they would have you in gaol in an hour, as they had your brother; but that they would dine first."

Sir William gazed at the boy with straining eyes, but without reply; and the sweet young voice added, "Oh go, go! It is a horrible place a gaol. Any place is better than that."

"It is!" said Sir William Winslow, solemnly; "It is!"

Again he held the boy to his heart; he pressed a warm and eager kiss upon his broad forehead; laid his hand upon his head, and said aloud, "May God bless thee, my child!" He then turned abruptly, and quitted the room by a door which led to a small cabinet

beyond. The boy gazed over all the fine things the library contained for a minute or two; and then asked himself if he should go or stay. The next moment there was a report of fire-arms, a heavy fall, and a low groan. The boy was terrified, he knew not at what. He crept towards the door and listened; but the moment after he heard the voice of Chandos in the hall; and running out, he caught him by the hand as he was speaking to one of the old footmen, and said, in a low voice, "Some one has been shooting in the house; and there is a groaning in that room."

"What does he mean?" cried Chandos, addressing the old man in much agitation.

"I thought I heard a shot too, Sir, when I was coming to answer your bell," said the servant, with a white face; "I hope nothing has happened. Master has been very odd all day."

"Where is it, Tim? Where is it?" cried Chandos.

"Here!" said the boy, leading the way

to the library, and then pointing to the door.

They opened it; and found what had been Sir William Winslow on the floor, with a pistol firmly clenched in his right hand, and the barrel grasped between his teeth. A powder-flask and bag of balls lay on a chair; and the carpet was drenched with blood.

CHAPTER XVI.

Crowds came and went to and from Elmsly House. For a long week the little world of the neighbourhood was kept in agitation by facts and falsehoods. Coroner's juries sat, and returned a verdict as much opposed to common sense as usual. The constables from S—— went back to their own place unaccompanied, and lost their labour. The Great Devourer had swallowed up the destined prey of judges and juries. Sir William Winslow was pronounced to have destroyed himself in a moment of temporary insanity; and there is no trying the dead for murder. The people viewed the plain and unostentatious funeral with feel-

ings of greater awe than is usually felt; for crime, by its happy rarity, has a greater effect than common death. Wild tales were told; some near to, some far from, the truth; and the nine days' wonder subsided, leaving the sky clear, and the waters smooth again.

So much for the outside of Elmsly House. In the inside, other scenes were taking place. Chandos did not quit the house, but, with his solicitor, remained in possession of that which was now his own; but the second night after the fatal event, when the coroner had sat and his jury had returned their verdict, the old servant Jacob came to his young master in the library, to tell him that there was a woman walking round and round the house, and weeping. "I saw her just now, sir," said the man; "and she seems flesh and blood; but were it not for that, I could almost swear that it was poor Susan Grey, of the mill, who drowned herself, you may remember."

"She was saved, my good friend," answered Chandos. "I will go and speak to her."

He went, and what took place he did not

ever care to repeat; but on his return he ordered the hall door to be left open night and day, and no one to oppose the entrance of that woman at any time, or to speak to her if they saw her. Each night she visited the room where the body of Sir William Winslow lay, and sat beside it from the hour of midnight till the east grew grey. On the night before the funeral she covered the coffin with ivy-leaves; and lingered till it was quite light ere she departed. Chandos Winslow was already up; and a servant, who watched at the door, instantly gave him notice that she was going forth. He followed her at once, and spoke to her both long and earnestly. The servants from the windows saw him show her a paper too; but she did not return with him to the house, which they judged by his gestures that he asked her to do.

On the following day, he and the boy Tim went out on foot, in deep mourning, and remained away for several hours; and in the evening they set out for London.

The first visit of Chandos was, as might be expected to the house of General Tracy; but he had little more to tell than the party there already knew, for his letters had been frequent during the last week. He thought Rose looked more lovely than ever; and though all that she had gone through, and the dark events which had connected themselves with the rise and progress of their love, had cast a saddening shade over the sparkling brightness of her face, yet there seemed to the eyes of Chandos more gained than lost by that softening melancholy. When Emily appeared, she was in mourning, not very deep, yet sufficient to mark a sense of the painful circumstances under which she had been freed from her ill-starred engagement to his brother. She greeted him warmly and affectionately; and gazed at him and Rose as they sat together on the sofa, as if she fancied, in her desponding mood, that in their happiness would consist her future. A brighter fate, however, was reserved for her at last.

A good deal of business remained for Chandos to transact. His brother's will, by which a thousand per annum was bequeathed to "the boy, now under the charge of Chandos Winslow, Esq.," was proved; and, to avoid all doubt or cavil which such vague expressions might cause at a future period, Chandos at once secured the annuity to his little protegé by deed. With Lord Overton, he found no difficulty. The production of his father's second will showed at once that Sir William Winslow had no power to sell the Winslow Abbey estate; and the money to repay the sum which had been received as part payment was easily raised upon the Elmsly property. The remainder of the rents of that portion of his land the young baronet set aside as a sinking-fund to pay off the encumbrance; and from that source, with the money in the public funds, the property was cleared in a few years. When all the necessary arrangements were complete in London, Chandos left the little boy at the house of General Tracy, and went down again to prepare

Winslow Abbey for the reception of a bride. Much was wanting; but skill, and taste, and ample means accomplished with great speed the reparation of all that many years of neglect had done to dilapidate the building, and desolate the grounds.

It was one day while thus employed that he was joined in the park by Lockwood, who came to tell him that a young gipsy had been to his house to ask where Chandos was, and to request him to come down to the wood on the other side of the river.

"I fear," said Lockwood, "that poor girl is very ill, from what the lad told me."

Chandos went instantly to the spot pointed out, and found the apprehensions of Lockwood fully verified. Under a coarse, dingy blanket, hung between two trees, to give more air than one of the ordinary gipsy tents afforded, with dimmed eyes and sunken cheeks, lay the once lovely Susan Grey. Her mind was wandering very much; but she knew Chandos at once; and from time to time the troubled stream of her thoughts

seemed to become suddenly clear. The young gentleman remained by her side for more than two hours with several of the gipsies, both male and female, looking on. In the course of her rambling and broken conversation, much of her preceding history was told. It seemed that when she had cast herself headlong from the bank into the river, near Elmsly, some gipsies had been passing by; and an old man, the head of the tribe, had rescued her. It was an exploit of his old age, and he was proud of it; and loving her because he had saved her from destruction, he adopted her as his daughter. Her superior knowledge, for she had been carefully educated, and even the occasional aberration of her intellect, and the quick decision of character which bitter misfortune sometimes gives, soon obtained for her great consideration in the tribe, which was confirmed by the accidental fulfilment of many of her fortunate guesses. So of course we must call them; but it is to be remarked that she herself, even in her last hour, maintained

that her predictions proceeded from a real foresight of coming events. Although she had eagerly sought to see Chandos, he could only discover that she had one request to make, and that referred to her interment.

"Let me have Christian burial," she said more than once; "for I die a Christian; and lay me beside him who should have been my husband."

Chandos promised, and he kept his word; for, much to the scandal of some, the poor miller's erring daughter, the wandering gipsy woman, lies in the vault of the Winslow family.

"Ay, she came to choose her place more than a month ago," said the old sexton, after the funeral: "she gave me two golden sovereigns one night, to let her have the keys of the vault for two hours; and I knew very well what she came for, so I didn't disturb her."

It was in the brown autumn time that Rose Tracy gave her hand to Chandos Winslow; and at Christmas the whole party assembled

round the fire at Northferry. By the side of Emily, whose cheek had regained the rose, and whose lip had won back its smiles, sat Horace Fleming. He looked very happy. Something was whispered to Emily, while the rest were busy with other things. "No Horace," she said; "yet three months, and then if you will."

A few other characters remain to be disposed of; but as no great length of time has passed since the events just detailed took place, the fate of several of our people is still hanging in the balance where we weigh till death. Little Tim is now, I believe, at Eton; and is a remarkably intelligent and amiable boy. The young gentlemen will excuse my not mentioning the name he now goes by. It is neither Winslow nor Stanley. Lockwood is precisely the same being as when Chandos first met with him—down to the leather gaiters. One satisfactory thing has occurred within my own knowledge. The Italian, Benini, is working in chains at Leghorn. He went into the service of a Russian

nobleman, who, to Benini's great grief, was cruelly assassinated at Sienna. The police of Tuscany, however, did not like Benini to be so much afflicted; and they tried him for murder. He persisted in declaring his innocence; but the incredulous brutes would not believe him; and under the mild laws of that mild government, he was condemned to hard labour for life.

One word more: Mr. Scriptolemus Bond is a Valet de Place, in Paris, where he exercises his abilities in the same direction as before, though in a narrower sphere. He, however, is contented with his fate, although repinings will sometimes visit him, especially when a share list meets his eyes.

On the contrary, Chandos Winslow, and Rose his wife, are contented, without repining. They may have to suffer some evils, as a healthy man will have a cold now and then; but if we were to look into all hearts, the grand secret which they would display is this, that, balance the account of life how we will, the sum of happiness is in favour of

virtue. Without it, there is no contentment; and with it, the peace of God which passes all understanding, surpasses everything that earth can give.

END OF VOL. III.

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